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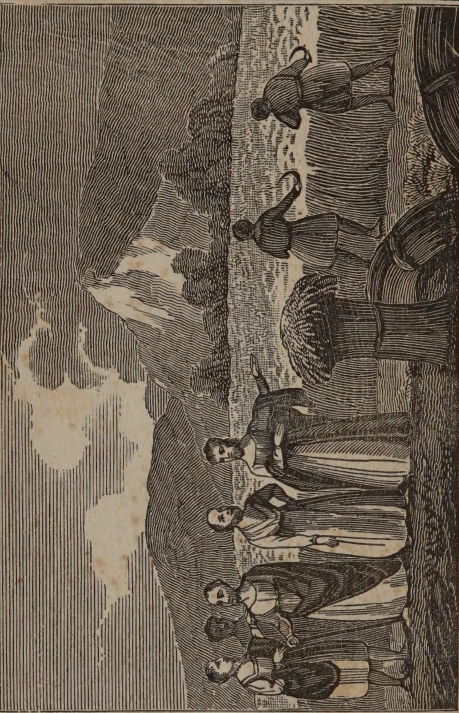
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WABASH COLL

No. 5726



HISTORY
OF THE
AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

THE FIELD IS THE WORLD. MAT. XIII. 58.



THE
VILLAGE PASTOR :
OR THE
ORIGIN AND PROGRESS
OF THE
AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
Conversations and Letters on the Sandwich Islands and
Bombay Missions, &c.

Lawson, J.

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THE VILLAGE PASTOR :
OR
HISTORY OF THE
AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

CHAPTER I.

“ Great God ! mine eyes with pleasure look
On the dear volume of thy book ;
There my Redeemer’s face I see,
And read his name who died for me.”

THE birth of Hermon Guildford called forth those thrilling joys and hopes and affections experienced in some degree by all Christian parents, when they embrace a first-born. A few hours after that event, Mr. Guildford read a part of the second chapter of Exodus, and when he came to the 9th verse and read, “ Take this child away and nurse it for me, and I will pay *thee* thy wages,” the tide of affection rose high, and, for some moments, forbade utterance. After Mr. Guildford had

recovered his usual calmness, he consecrated his tender infant to Christ and his Church in solemn prayer. In this pious act of unreserved devotement, both parents were of one heart and one mind.

They felt deeply their own weakness and insufficiency, and from that hour they took the word of God for their guide, and daily searched its sacred pages for rules by which to govern themselves, and the child whom God had given them.

The highest wish of the parents was to see their darling boy give early evidence of having experienced the renewing and sanctifying grace of the Gospel, and in mature life to become a faithful and successful minister of Jesus Christ. They resolved to train up their child in the way he ought to walk, assured, if they did so, that when he was old he would not depart from it.

As his mind began to unfold, they labored to subdue the spirit of rebellion which, before he had numbered many months, betrayed its existence in his heart. They were convinced, that if the child was not brought under subjection while very young, his happiness would

be greatly diminished, and, in all probability, his conversion delayed. They early commenced a course of discipline, both tender and firm, which led him to form a habit of obedience,—*absolute obedience*, to every word and look of authority from his wise and affectionate parents.

Mr. and Mrs. Guildford were unwavering believers in the early conversion of children, and their mode of giving religious instruction corresponded with their faith and expectation. They watched for evidence of the special operations of the Holy Spirit upon his heart with great solicitude, and prayed with intense desire for his speedy conversion to God; and their efforts were owned, and the blessing came. Before Hermon had attained seven years, he gave as unequivocal evidence of supreme love to his Savior, as persons of riper age; and with truth it might be said of him, that as he grew in stature, he grew in favor with God and man.

This little boy had formed the important habits of early rising, order, and industry, long before he was sent to a public school. His

parents had been very careful not to let their own example be at variance with the precepts they had endeavored to enforce during the first years of his existence. During the whole course of his education, he maintained a high standing as a scholar and a Christian, and when about twenty-four, his classical and theological studies were completed, and he was considered a very acceptable preacher. That the Savior would prepare a people to whom the Gospel might prove *a savor of life*, as it fell from his lips, had been the prayer of his heart for years; and when, in the providence of God, he was introduced into the ministry at M——, and the dews of divine grace began to distil upon the Church, he acknowledged with tears, that the Lord was indeed the hearer and answerer of prayer.

M—— was a large manufacturing village, which had grown up within a few years; and, although the people had not been entirely destitute of the means of grace, yet Mr. Guildford was their first pastor. The Church had recently been organized, and contained

very few members ; but they were intelligent, fervent Christians, and closely united. Mrs. Eckley, with whom Mr. Guildford boarded, was truly *a mother in Israel* ; her husband was the founder of the village, a man of ardent piety, and considerable wealth. Having no children, he had given much of his property to religious and charitable purposes during his lifetime, and after the decease of his widow, his mansion, which had been fitted up with taste and convenience, he had bequeathed to the parish, for a parsonage.

The influence Mrs. Eckley exerted over Mr. Guildford was very happy ; she had seen much of the world, and in early life had moved in the most refined circles ; her natural vivacity was chastened, and somewhat subdued by the repeated bereavements she had experienced, but her uniform cheerfulness, affectionate manners, and good sense, gave to her conversation peculiar interest.

She anxiously desired to communicate happiness, and secure the best good of all over whom she could exert her influence. She

amused, cheered and encouraged Mr. Guildford, whose natural timidity sometimes rendered himself and others uncomfortable, and she strove to aid him in overcoming all those feelings of constraint, which she knew would lessen his usefulness among the people of his charge. Mr. Guildford was aware of this defect, and gratefully acknowledged the kindness of Mrs. Eckley in aiding him to remove it. It was not long before he was enabled to throw aside the silence and reserve which had been cherished by the seclusion of his youth in his habits of close study ; and becoming easy and open in his address, he was accessible to all his parishioners of every condition, who daily manifested for him a growing attachment.

After the death of Gen. Eckley, the Sabbath school had declined until, at the time of Mr. Guildford's settlement, it contained hardly fifty children. Mrs. Eckley had exerted herself to sustain several little charitable associations, but had not been able to conduct them with that system and energy, so necessary to secure the greatest success.

Mr. Guildford's first care was to guard against

interruptions in his regular hours for study, and then he concerted measures with Mrs. Eckley, for bringing out all the energies of the Church. He clearly foresaw that all the moral and intellectual power it contained, would be barely sufficient to carry forward with vigor the "*system of means*" he determined to adopt, to raise his society to a high state of religious prosperity.

Having a well balanced mind and uncommon discretion, he did not sink down into discouragement because he found every thing to do; neither did he, with an ill-timed zeal, attempt to do every thing at once. He longed to see an extensive, genuine revival of religion, and he laid himself out to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord with great power and glory. The Sabbath school was re-organized, teachers selected from the best members of the Church, the monthly distribution of well chosen tracts commenced, and gradually one society after another sprung up in the midst of that people, who cherished them all with increasing faithfulness. In the course of a few months,

almost every child in the parish was to be seen in the Sabbath school, eager to enjoy the benefit of the library which had been purchased after Mr. Guildford's ordination.

With a view to bring all the young people under his own eye, who felt too old to attend the Sabbath school, but whose youth and inexperience required as much instruction and watchfulness as at any other period of their lives, a meeting was established on Saturday evenings, which was emphatically called *Mr. Guildford's meeting*. The hall in which they met was large and commodious, and by the generous care of Mrs. Eckley, it was furnished with maps and many other things for comfort and usefulness. About the time this Bible class was formed, Mrs. Eckley was called to attend at the deathbed of her brother-in-law, Mr. Charles Walton ; it was his dying request that she would assume the care and responsibilities of a mother to his three orphan children. Their mother had been removed many years, and Mrs. Eckley had ever felt an ardent at-

tachment for the children of her only sister, which made her cheerfully engage to do for them all that her circumstances would admit.

She remained with the mourning children till after the interment of their father, and then returned with them to her pleasant house at M——. Charlotte Walton was a sprightly, blooming girl of fifteen, her brother Richard, twelve, and Philander, about eight years of age.

Soon after the return of Mrs. Eckley, Mr. Guildford described to her the plan he intended to adopt in his Bible class lessons. In the first place, he designed to give instruction in the chronology, history, and geography of the Bible, and its most important doctrines, precepts and duties, which would take up a considerable portion of time ; he then intended to introduce the various benevolent institutions of the present age, and make them familiarly acquainted with the operations and successes of each. Mrs. Eckley expressed her unqualified approbation of the plan, and suggested the

propriety of commencing with the American Bible Society. She said, she had long wished to have the results of the Bible Society spread out before the Sabbath schools in this country, as well as the Bible classes, for the details occupied so many pages, that comparatively few persons ever read all that had been published.

Mrs. Eckley, felt much anxiety about the education of her niece, unwilling to send her away to school until she had enjoyed more particular religious instruction while her heart was soft and tender from recent affliction ; and yet fearful she would lose much knowledge she had already acquired, by a suspension of study, she sought counsel of Mr. Guildford, who kindly offered to hear her recitations, and attend to those branches of study, with which Mrs. Eckley was unacquainted. This arrangement was very agreeable to all concerned.—The little boys were sent to a select school in the village, and though so young, they begged hard to be allowed to join the Bible class.—

They were both fine scholars, and with the assistance of their sister Charlotte, were able to keep up with the oldest in the Bible class.

At the time appointed by Mr. Guildford to give a history of the origin and progress of the Bible Society, Mrs. Eckley, with her whole family, and almost the whole parish, were present; and when all were seated and ready to hear, Mr. Guildford said :

My dear friends,—You are doubtless aware that all the knowledge we have obtained of heaven and hell, of Christ and salvation, of angels and disembodied spirits, has been drawn from the Bible. In this blessed volume God has revealed the origin and destiny of our race; his own true character, purposes and will concerning man, both in time and eternity. Every ray of light and beam of hope beyond the grave, shines through this inspired book.

Here we learn that our first parents were created holy and happy—that by their disobedience, sin was introduced into the world, followed by death and all the sorrows attendant

upon man in his fallen state. The holy Bible reveals a way by which self-ruined man may return to his Maker, and become reconciled, pardoned, and saved by faith in the divine Savior,—that *way* is not left in obscurity, is not difficult and inaccessible—no, it is the way of the cross, and is marked with the footsteps of the Son of God.

This way is hidden only to those whom sin has blinded, and Satan beguiled. Before the meek, humble, and teachable inquirer after truth and duty, light shines so brightly that men and children need not err. Before each of you, beloved members of this Bible class, the blazing light of heaven shines brightly, and shows not only the *strait gate* and *narrow way*, but that cross upon which hangs the last hope of a dying world. Look beyond that cross to the gates of everlasting glory through which the Savior passed to the right hand of the throne of God, and under the weight of obligation which his dying love lays upon you, bow low before him. This debt of love can never be discharged, for it increases with every new

mercy we receive ; but if grateful, you can show your gratitude to your Savior, and your attachment to his cause by efforts to extend a knowledge of his name to the myriads who are now sitting in the region and shadow of death. A great work is to be done, before the day of millennial glory shines upon the world. It is estimated that there are, in the United States, from *two hundred and fifty to three hundred thousand* families destitute of the Holy Bible ; and this number, it is ascertained by recent investigations made in even favored parts of our country, is rapidly increasing. Not one sixth part of those who profess the Christian faith have ever been in possession of these precious Scriptures, that make wise unto salvation, all who love and obey the blessed truths they reveal. Less than two hundred millions of our race are nominally Christians ; and not one sixth part of these have ever possessed a Bible ! How gladly would I persuade you to flee yourselves for refuge to the hope set before you in this Gospel, and then I would urge you to put forth all your strength to send this holy volume

to all who are groping in pagan darkness through their want of it.

What higher honor can you desire than to be united with the wise and good in circulating this matchless book? For, be assured, wherever the word of God is received in the love of it, whether in a palace or in an almshouse, there it will uniformly produce the same precious fruits,—a “humble and contented mind—a kind and forgiving disposition—a tender conscience—a holy life—and usually, a happy death.”

In giving you a History of the American Bible Society, I hope to interest your best feelings; and, that you may fully understand the subject, I shall enter, as much as is practicable, into particulars, and shall be happy to answer any inquiries you may feel disposed to make.

The American Bible Society was organized in the city of New York, in May, 1816. The design of the gentlemen who formed this National Society, was “to combine unity of

effort with economy of means" in circulating the Holy Bible, without *note or comment* through the whole length and breadth of the land. And when this should be accomplished, they agreed to extend the influence of the Society to other lands, whether nominal Christian, Mohammedan, or Pagan, so far as their funds would allow.

In order to prevent party and sectarian prejudices and jealousies, the Managers were elected from seven different denominations, viz: the Episcopalian, Baptist, Presbyterian, Reformed Dutch, Methodist, Congregational, and the Society of Friends. In this great and good work, these brethren of different names have labored with that harmony and brotherly affection, so necessary to secure the confidence of the public, and the best interests of the Society.

The first year, the Board of Managers held a monthly business meeting, but finding the establishment increase so rapidly that they could not do justice to the cause, a committee of five active, judicious men was appointed to

meet weekly, and take under their care the property of the Society, except what had been deposited in the treasury. Orders for Bibles and money were drawn by this Committee, who were authorized to act, in ordinary cases, for the Managers. They kept every transaction fairly recorded, and brought their books before the Managers at their monthly meetings. As the business accumulated, other committees were appointed, so that the whole concern was conducted in an economical and prudent manner. The funds were so limited the first year, that they did not warrant the support of traveling agents, without whose aid it has long been found difficult to awaken a general interest in a cause, however excellent it might be.

The receipts of the first year were between thirty and forty thousand dollars, the greater part of which was expended for paper, stereotype plates, and other materials for making Bibles. The Managers were very successful in the execution of their plans, and money flowed into the treasury more plentifully than they had scarcely dared to hope. Seventeen

or eighteen thousand Bibles were issued from the press, and many copies were purchased and put into circulation. A room was obtained for a Biblical Library, and many donations of valuable books, and early editions of the Scriptures, in various languages, were made by gentlemen in this and foreign countries. The universal diffusion of the holy Scriptures is a delightful subject for Christian contemplation. Let us indulge the cheering hope that the time draws near when every member of all the Bible classes and Sabbath schools will be personally aiding this great work, by their contributions, and their labors. And all those whom I have the pleasure to address this evening, I feel confident, will improve the opportunity which will soon be offered them in so doing.

When was the American Bible Society formed ? Where ? What was its design ? How many denominations united in this enterprize ? How large were the receipts of the first year ? How many Bibles were issued ?

CHAPTER II.

“ How precious is the book divine,
By inspiration given !
Bright as a lamp its doctrines shine,
To guide our souls to heaven.”

WHEN the Bible class met again, Mr. Guildford soon discovered a disposition for free conversation, which he wished to cherish ; he therefore took his chair, and sat down in the midst of his youthful charge, and a few of the most active members of the Church.

Mr. P—— said, “ I shall be greatly disappointed, Mr. Guildford, if the subject you took up last Saturday evening, does not awaken many persons to a deeper sense of Christian obligation, than they have heretofore cherished. For one, I can truly say, that I have felt an increasing uneasiness ever since I left that meeting. In conversation with others, I find many persons feel as much concerned as I do, and we do sincerely hope you will lose no

time in forming a Bible Society in this town. I know a considerable number who are anxious to subscribe something. I fear none of us have been doing much for the Bible cause ; but we have resolved to engage with you in good earnest."

Mr. Guildford. I am disposed to believe that the funds will be increased just in proportion to the knowledge that is disseminated concerning the wants of the world. Those wants are pressing, and far greater than has generally been imagined. I shall be very happy to aid you in maturing some plan for a society, which will give persons of every age and condition an opportunity to show their attachment to the word of God, and their compassionate regard for those who are destitute of this rich blessing.

Mrs. Eckley. Mr. Guildford, would there be any impropriety in attempting to form a Female Bible Society, in this place ?

Mr. G. I do not perceive the least—indeed, I know of no charity that ought to interest females more than the circulation of the holy Scriptures, for it is a well known fact, that

wherever the Gospel prevails, their sex are raised to an elevated rank in society, altogether unknown in heathen and Mohammedan countries. The success of the English and Irish ladies, is very encouraging. I have been informed that from ten to twenty thousand are personally engaged in carrying the Bible to the dwellings of want, ignorance, and misery, in both of those countries ; and in America, I am acquainted with a large number who are employed in the same way. Many of them are distinguished for their talents, virtues, and high standing in society. I hope soon to see the names of all the aged, middle aged, children and youth in my congregation, enrolled as contributors to this noble institution.

Charlotte Walton. Have not the ladies in those countries been much longer engaged in circulating the Bible, than in America ?

Mr. G. Not very many years longer. The British and Foreign Bible Society was established in 1804, in the city of London ; a regular auxiliary was formed in the same city the next year, and one in Birmingham ; in 1806,

a third was formed at Bath. So you see the progress of that society which has taken the lead of most Bible Societies, was not very rapid for the first four or five years ; but afterwards a sacred flame was kindled, which spread far and wide.

The first Ladies' Bible Society, directly auxiliary to that of the British and Foreign, was formed in the summer of 1811.

Richard Walton. Was that the first Female Bible Society in England, Mr. Guildford ?

Mr. G. O no ; the first I ever heard of, was formed the same year that the Parent Society in England was organized, but without any knowledge that such a society had been or was likely to be originated ; and as it was a very interesting fact to me, I will relate it, in the hope that it may stimulate some of the young females in our Bible class and Sabbath school, to go and do likewise.

A little girl in Sheffield, England, named Catharine Elliott, had a brother younger than herself. Both these children were much in the habit of visiting the poor ; and having very

compassionate hearts, they tried to relieve their sufferings, all in their power. Catharine was surprised and grieved to find so many poor families destitute of the Bible ; and she resolved to lay aside a penny every week, till she had saved enough to buy a Testament, which she intended to lend them. The little boy said he would lay by half a penny a week ; so they procured a small tin box, in which they carefully deposited their mite every week, till their first object was accomplished.

At the commencement of this affair, the children little thought they should ever be able to raise money enough to purchase a Bible to lend ; but you will soon hear how much a persevering child, of a benevolent disposition, can accomplish to benefit our fellow men. Catharine was a fine scholar, and she composed a short address to her schoolfellows, requesting them to join her in procuring Bibles and Testaments for the poor in their neighborhood.

The little girls were pleased to have her invite them to join her, and they cheerfully saved all their candy and toy money, and some of

them felt a little surprised to find how much their happiness was increased by denying themselves to do good.

They used to visit the poor, and read the Bible to those who had never been taught the art of reading. As they grew older their society was better regulated, and four out of their number were chosen to meet every fortnight to manage its concerns.

The remarkable conduct of these children attracted the attention of many of the ladies and gentlemen in the vicinity, and they sent them money from time to time, to assist in forwarding their pious designs. One year they received more than a hundred dollars! And that society, which commenced in such a quiet, humble way, has distributed hundreds and thousands of Bibles long ago.

"I know where Sheffield, is," whispered Philander to his sister, who was sitting beside him.

"Perhaps some of these little boys and girls do not know," said Mr. Guildford, who over-

heard him, "you may speak out, if you please."

Philander replied quickly, his face covered with blushes, "It stands on a branch of the river Ouse, and is celebrated for the manufacture of *knives and files*."

Mr. G. This is a manufacturing place, as well as Sheffield, and contains a large number of poor people, and it would not surprise me to learn that there were many Bibles needed in this village, by people who would be very glad to receive them. The Bible is the pure and inexhaustible fountain from which we may all draw light, comfort, and courage in adversity, and even in death.

Mrs. Eckley heard several little girls near her say, in a soft whisper, "I wish he would tell us what became of Catharine Elliott." And she immediately proposed the question to Mr. Guildford, much to the satisfaction of the children, who were unconscious that they had been overheard.

Mr. G. Catharine became an excellent

young lady, and was suitably married, and settled in the neighborhood of her birthplace. She is now the mother of several fine children, whom she brings up to promote Bible, Missionary, and other associations for making the world acquainted with Jesus Christ and his salvation. Her own zeal in the Bible cause continues to increase.

Mrs. E. You mentioned, sir, that the first regular female auxiliary to the parent institution was formed in 1811. Where did it originate?

Mr. G. At Westminster. However, other ladies associations had been in existence long before that. I have been informed that the first Bible association ever formed in Scotland—that land of Bibles—was by a few female servants in Aberdeen, who resolved to meet together statedly, and contribute a little towards sending the Gospel to the destitute. They agreed to pay a shilling at the time of entrance, and as much as they felt able to spare at each quarterly meeting. Their numbers increased so rapidly, that some of them consulted with

several ministers of the Gospel, and requested the favor of their attending some of their meetings, to impart instruction and to encourage them in their good resolutions. Their number soon amounted to two hundred and forty ; and the first donation was nearly seventy dollars, which they gave to the Edinburgh Bible Society. They afterwards sent nearly the same amount to the missionaries at Serampore, to aid in translating the Bible into some of the languages of India. This fact shows us distinctly, that where there exists in the heart a sincere desire to honor God, he will furnish the means, and grant an opportunity. Who will presume to assert that those poor girls were less happy, or the poorer, for their bountiful offerings to the Lord? Were you to inquire of them, individually, each of them, I doubt not, would assure you, that her own personal happiness was increased, by the economy and self-denial she was obliged to practise, to enable her to bless others with the invaluable treasures of revelation. It has been thought by some, that the example of those Scottish girls gave

an impulse to Bible efforts among their sex, in the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland. That example, so far from losing its influence, during more than thirty years, which have already passed, will, it is believed, continue to excite females in Russia, America, and other countries, for years to come. And I would ask the young females present, if they would think me extravagant, were I to express the belief that the knowledge of this anecdote would induce a large number of the females who are daily occupied in these manufactories, to imitate the worthy example of these Scottish girls?

No person attempted to answer by words, but the sparkling eyes, and smiling faces, gave promise of an immediate effort to increase the number of Bibles for gratuitous distribution. Mr. Guildford added, "The same class of females in Russia, brought forward their offerings for the same object, and presented them to a Bible agent, with the most joyful expressions. Two sisters said they longed for the honor of being enrolled members of the Bible Society,

and, after making a handsome donation, expressed their determination to give as much the next year; though they expected to be obliged to sacrifice their rest for several nights to earn that sum. The agent made some remark, feeling that perhaps it might not be their duty to give at such an expense of sleep. Another servant girl, a friend to the sisters, said, 'Love to the Redeemer minds no trouble.' "

Tears started in the eyes of many of the young people, present, and a pang was felt at their hearts, as they contrasted the generous, self-denying love of those Scotch and Russian servant girls, with their own indifference and self-indulgence.

Several gentlemen now entered the hall, and Mr. Guildford arose and said,—You will recollect, my friends, that last Saturday evening I related the principal labors of the American Bible Society, during the first two years of its existence. I will now further remark, that before the year 1819 closed, eight sets of stereotype plates for printing the Bible in English, French, and Spanish, had been procured; and

more than *forty-seven thousand three hundred* Bibles had been printed, besides *twenty-four thousand* Testaments. One thousand were printed in the Mohawk Indian tongue, and the same number in the language of the Delaware tribe. Auxiliary societies multiplied very fast in almost every section of the country, and through them the treasures of the Gospel were more and more widely diffused. The receipts for the year, amounted to more than *twenty-six thousand* dollars, and the Biblical Library was furnished with many valuable books in a variety of languages, by generous individuals in America, and with Bibles in nearly twenty different languages, from the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Hon. Elias Boudinot, the venerable President of the Society, was unable to attend the anniversary on account of indisposition, and he sent a most interesting letter, enclosing one hundred dollars, and another letter which he had received from a lady who had emigrated to the West many years before. She had formed a pretty extensive acquaintance with the

Delaware tribe of Indians, some of whom she respected as men of good understanding, who lamented the wretchedness and misery of their countrymen, but they knew of no way to provide a remedy. She had received a copy of the Delaware Scriptures, and her letter to the President was an acknowledgment of the favor. Her letter was read at the annual meeting, and produced a powerful effect ; and I will now read a part of it, which I am sure cannot fail of exciting an interest for the poor oppressed Indians on our frontier borders.

———, *February 1, 1819.*

Dear Sir,—My heart and eyes are gladdened with a sight long desired—a specimen of the translation of the Scriptures into the language of our western neighbors ; and from the impulse of congenial feeling, *I send you congratulations.*

I rejoice with you ;—with you, I raised my soul in grateful adoration to *Him*, who claims “the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possessions.”

About the year 1800, in the month of June, near the middle of the day, as I sat at work in the airy parlor at L——, I commanded a view of the smooth green yard, shaded from the fervor of the sun by the depending boughs of two luxuriant weeping willows, which two years' care had brought to a state of perfection.

The harmony of the scene so perfectly accorded with the feelings of my heart, that, at the moment, I experienced a tranquil delusive happiness. I ceased to think there was a human being in all the earth, *less happy* than myself!

This mental rest was interrupted by the entrance of two strangers of uncommon interest to my feelings. The first was my old friend, the Delaware chief, the Great Bock-on-jai-hailus. I arose to meet him with a cordial welcome. After shaking my hand, he said, "Lena-pah-quay,"—a name given me by the Delaware Indians,—“this is my friend, king Kabox-ki.” They took their seats, and informed me they called for the purpose of taking dinner with me,—having made the engagement with

my husband in the city. They were on their return from seeing their *great father*, as they called the President.

At dinner, they received my attentions as easy as persons of good breeding do, in those circles where *good breeding* excludes every useless ceremony.

King Ka-box-ki was silent. When he spoke, it was in the Delaware tongue: he desired his friend to tell me he could not speak English. Bock-on-jai-hai-lus was more communicative; he informed me the President had said they must improve their ground—their young men must learn to plough—their young women must learn to spin. He seemed *dejected*, but appeared *noble* and animated in his whole deportment. While we sat at the table, after the cloth was removed, and after some conversation, he said “Le-na-pa-quay, we now go.” “And when shall I see you again, Bock-on-jai-hai-lus?” said I. “Me old,” said he, “me soon *lie* down,”—spreading his hand with a low horizontal motion; then raising his eyes to heaven, and extending his hand towards me with devout expression, he added, with an ef-

fusion of feeling—I have never seen one more expressive—“but we shall meet *with Jesus!*”

With sympathetic ardor and Christian love, I took his hand, inquiring with rapture, “Back-on-jai-hai-lus, do you know Jesus?” He answered, with firmness, “*Me know Jesus—we love Jesus!*” Then rising from the table, they shook hands *solemnly*, saying, “*farewell.*”

My eyes followed their venerable figures till the door closed from my view, for the last time in *this world*, the Great Bock-on-jai-hai-lus, and his friend king Ka-box-ki.

The interview, so truly sublime interested me more tenderly, being a *nation of strangers*, than I could have been from any other circumstance, and brought to my heart, with sweet conviction of its efficacy, the declaration of Scripture, “in Christ Jesus there is neither male, nor female, barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free!”

Often has my heart reverted, with much tender recollection, *to this scene!* Often, in the sincerity of *my soul*, have I wished it might be

in my power to contribute my *mite* towards their religious improvement ; for I firmly believe they are vessels of mercy. And now, my dear sir, that my faith may not be dead, “ being *alone*,” I commit into *your hand*, as President of the American Bible Society, and the friend of humanity, one hundred dollars, for the department, particularly, of the Delaware *translation*.

With sentiments of high respect, I am, dear sir, your sister,

LE-NA-PAH-QUAY.

As Mr. Guildford laid the letter aside, he cast a look of inquiry upon his little audience ; and, satisfied that he was incapable of improving the impression already produced, he said, in a suppressed tone, “ a short prayer will close the exercises.” His prayer was very short and pertinent, and every person left the room in silence.

When was the British and Foreign Bible Society formed ? Where ? When and where its first regular auxiliary ? When the first ladies’ auxiliary ? Who originated the first Female Bible Society in England ? How many Bibles did the American Bible Society print in 1819 ? How many Testaments ? How much money did it receive ?

CHAPTER III.

“ Divine Instructor, gracious Lord,
Be thou forever near ;
Teach me to love this sacred word,
And view my Savior there ! ”

MR. GUILDFORD had prepared two sermons for the following Sabbath, in which he urged upon his hearers the duty of benevolence. In the morning he took these words for his text, “ There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth ; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.” In the afternoon his text was, “ Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might : for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest.”

The heart of the preacher seemed deeply imbued with the sentiments of his texts ; and speaking from the heart, it sunk into the hearts

of his hearers, and they soon gave evidence that it had taken root, by their anxiety to engage in some good work they had hitherto neglected.

The next Saturday evening, Mr. Guildford was too unwell to go out, and Mrs. Eckley sent Richard to the hall to give notice to all who might assemble, that if any persons felt disposed to walk down to Mrs. Eckley's, Mr. Guildford would spend an hour with them,—though too unwell to afford encouragement of their having much of a meeting.

Richard had hardly left the house, before Mr. S——, an agent of the Bible Society, and a dear friend of Mr. Guildford, providentially called. He was easily prevailed on to spend the Sabbath, being assured by Mr. Guildford that he should be very happy to exert his influence to have an auxiliary society formed in the parish before he should leave town. Mrs. Eckley had two large parlors, which she could make into one by throwing open the large folding doors that separated them. This large room was crowded with persons of both sexes,

of almost every age, from four to fourscore years. However, the largest proportion by far, were youth and children.

Mr. Guildford made a few statements connected with the regular course of the society's operations, and was then followed by Mr. S——, the agent, who related a variety of anecdotes, and made many exhortatory remarks, which interested the assembly exceedingly.

Mr. Guildford said, "I will call your attention this evening, to the operations of the National Bible Society, during the years 1820, 1821, and 1822. The great work of diffusing the light of life was prosecuted with undiminished zeal, and increasing confidence. The Managers sought for opportunities to send the Bible to the Sandwich Islands—to Ceylon—to various part of Africa—to South America; and they were more successful in their efforts in 1820, than in the years that had preceded it. In all, they expended in gratuitous distribution, more than eleven thousand dollars worth of Bibles and Testaments. The year 1820 was distinguished by the active co-operations of la-

dies, and youth connected with the colleges in the United States. A new interest seemed to have been awakened among the *young men* in different parts of the country. In Yale College the students made the President and one of the Professors, Directors for life ; and their example produced results somewhat similar in other places.

Experience taught the Managers that it would be productive of more good, generally, to sell their Bibles at cost, or at reduced prices, rather than to dispose of them gratuitously. Many persons felt a repugnance to ask for a Bible, or to receive one without some kind of compensation ; though, at the same time, they were destitute of the means of paying so large a sum as was charged by the booksellers. The Managers recommended, to all their auxiliaries the adoption of this course ; and it was soon apparent that those who paid, in whole or in part, set a higher value upon the Bible than those who received it without money and without price. By pursuing this plan of operation, the Board of Managers were enabled to prosecute their work

more vigorously and to a much greater extent. One prominent object kept in view by the Managers, through the years 1821 and 1822, was, to supply the States and Territories west of the Alleghany mountains. Into that deep and wide valley, they sought to pour the light of Gospel truth through every channel that could be found capable of conveying it. They felt, with the Christian community generally, that the morals, peace, prosperity, and even credit of our rising republic, were deeply involved in the religious character of that section of country.

Most of the auxiliaries, recognized in 1822, were *Marine* Bible Societies; and frequent accounts of increased anxiety to gain possession of the Scriptures among seamen, gave to the Managers great satisfaction, as well as encouragement. Notwithstanding the pressure of the times, the receipts of the Society gave the most cheering evidence that its interests were becoming more and more dear to the hearts of the Christian community. Official statements were made at the anniversary in May, 1822, which proved that the sales of Bibles and Testaments

had been greater, and the amount of property belonging to the Society, larger, than any year preceding. Encouraged by the liberal support of the public, and animated by authentic accounts of the saving benefits derived by many individuals from the word of God which the Society had circulated, the Board persevered in their labors with new zeal. Auxiliary societies multiplied on the right hand and on the left ; and between them and the Parent Society the most delightful harmony and entire confidence prevailed. It was ascertained, that not less than two hundred and sixty-eight thousand, one hundred and seventy-five Bibles and Testaments, or parts of the Testament, had been printed or purchased by the funds of the Society, before the sixth year of its existence had closed. I will now request Mr. S—— to relate such facts, and make such remarks, as he may think proper. Mr. S—— rose and said,

My friends,—I am happy to find your beloved pastor engaged in urging the claims of the Bible cause upon the members of his congregation. It is a cause worthy of his and of

your best affections ; and would you increase your own happiness and comfort in religion, you will joyfully co-operate with him and the friends of our common Savior, in disseminating that holy book which through faith in Jesus Christ is able to make wise unto salvation. Many of you may suppose that Bibles are very plenty ; you may hardly know a family without one ; unless you have actually made an investigation,—you may very naturally suppose there is not a family in this neighborhood but has more than one Bible or Testament. But were you to appoint a committee in each school district, in this town, whose duty it should be to visit every family and ascertain who were destitute of the whole Scriptures, I feel confident the result of such an investigation would convince you that there was a great work of benevolence laying upon the hands of the friends of Christ, which had been too long neglected. Perhaps some of you shrink from the thought of entering the dwellings of your neighbors with such an inquiry, lest you should be thought obtrusive and indelicate. Others have felt so too,

and I have been among the number of such, but my own experience, and that of many with whom I have had intercourse, who have been long engaged in Bible distributions, has convinced me that these apprehensions are almost entirely groundless. On one occasion I was cautioned against visiting a certain family, who had never been in possession of a Bible. Knowing that I was one of a distributing committee, he threatened that, if I brought one over his threshold, he would take my life and burn the Bible. I had often heard of similar threats from persons who, when I visited them, treated me with kindness, and received a Bible with expressions of gratitude. My walk was long and solitary ; but I did not feel intimidated, although there was abundant evidence that the report of what had been threatened had not been exaggerated. When I arrived at the distant dwelling, the owner of the house met me at the door with a stern look. I inquired after the health of his family, and walked in ; his wife was surrounded by her poor neglected children, and bore marks of recent abuse

from her savage husband. There was an air of melancholy and misery such as I never saw in a house where the Bible was possessed, read, and obeyed; but even in that family, I was treated with respect; and the Bible, and the exhortation which followed the offer of it, were received with great solemnity, and the man, with apparently deep feeling, promised, as in the presence of the divine Author of the Bible, to read a portion of it daily to his wife and children, who had never been taught. I presume some present may feel astonished to hear that this visit was made in New England, but a few years ago; and still more astonished when I add, that the same day I visited fourteen families in the same town, equally destitute.

O my friends, if you examine the state of America—of the world, you will be filled with surprise at the gross darkness that envelopes so great a portion of it, and with deep self-reproach that you have done so little to relieve the miseries that you will find in your own neighborhood—miseries which would never have existed if you had provided the word of

God, and used your influence to bring those around you under its controlling power. It has been estimated, by good judges, that there were, a short time ago, millions of the population of these United States destitute of the Bible. And to convince you that this estimate is partially, if not wholly, true, I will relate several facts from good authority.

It was stated officially, not very long since, that in one of our southern States, of forty thousand families, ten thousand were found entirely destitute of the word of God. In one county of a western State, four hundred families were destitute. In another western State, eight thousand families had no part of the sacred oracles.

There still remains in the western States, hundreds and thousands unblessed with the preaching of the Gospel, and without the means of grace as known and valued in some of the most favored eastern States. To them the Sabbath is as other days, and multitudes are hardly conscious of its return.

From these facts you are not to infer that

these people are unwilling to receive the Bible when it is offered to them. Instances have frequently been found, where it has been most thankfully received, and even purchased. A little circumstance just occurs to my mind, which I will mention. A few years ago, a gentleman living on the banks of the Ohio river, felt exceedingly concerned that so many emigrants to the west, went unfurnished with Bibles, tracts, and other religious books. For a long time he took a daily walk up and down the shore with Bibles, which he sold to those able and disposed to purchase ; and to those whom poverty denied the means of purchasing, but who showed a desire for instruction, he presented a Bible gratuitously. One day he was followed from one boat to another by a gentleman, who at last said, " Surely, I have reason to bless God for Bible Societies. I trust they have been the means of saving my soul." This remark from the stranger, greatly encouraged the distributor in his work, and upon entering into conversation of some length, he learned that his new friend and brother in

Christ, had followed the seas in his youth.—Many years before, he was in the city of New York, surrounded by a company of sailors, when he was called upon by a Bible collector. In a great frolic, they gave him two dollars apiece ; and this man said the circumstance never came into his mind for several years afterwards. He had made many voyages, and continued the same gay and careless fellow, till at last, on his way to Europe, he saw a Bible in the steerage, and taking it up, he saw on the cover, “ New York Bible Society.” The call of the Bible collector, the donation, and subsequent frolic, darted across his mind, followed by such a sensation of horror as he had never before experienced. He carried that holy book, which he had ever lightly esteemed, to his berth in silence—he read and trembled—for he felt that eternal destruction was but one step before him. He said he could not leave it, though every page conveyed fresh tidings of wo. At last, helpless and hopeless, he sank down at the feet of his Savior, resolving, if he perished, to perish *there*.

It was an hour of darkness—his soul was in extremity—Jesus alone could deliver, and the moment he cast himself unreservedly upon him for salvation, He revealed himself to the broken-hearted penitent, in all his beauty and glory—the poor sailor melted into tears of love as he gave himself away again and again to be the Lord's forever. He soon quit the sea—removed his family to the great valley of the Mississippi—erected an altar to Jehovah, and for many a year has been a bright and shining light to all his neighbors.

Do you not think, my hearers, that this one conversion, if no other had ever occurred as the result of the labors of that Society, would have been ample compensation for all their toils and expense? Other facts of equal interest, show both the saving benefits resulting from reading the Scriptures, furnished by this Society, and the gratitude of the recipients of this sacred charity. I will mention a few which, I trust, will impress your minds with the importance of laboring to put the word of God into the hands of all our own countrymen, and awaken greater

interest for the Catholic emigrants who seek an asylum from tyranny, oppression, and want, in this land of Gospel light and liberty.

A young lady from Europe, brought up in the Catholic faith, ignorant of the Gospel, found a part of a New Testament, which a little boy undesignedly dropped in her father's house, and it proved the instrument of her conversion.

In one of the cities of the South, a Bible distributor gave a Bible to a very poor man, who sometime afterwards fell sick. A Christian, calling in to ask how he did, found him alone, with his eyes closed, his hands clasped, and his open Bible laying upon his breast. "You have an excellent companion," said the visiter, who perceived he had been reading a chapter in Job. "O yes!" said the sick man with difficulty, "'tis better than father—mother—brother—sister. 'Tis my meat—my drink—my sleep. I love to read about Job; he was worse (more afflicted) than I, yet he got to heaven."

In the same city, a female Bible distributor

gave a Bible to a poor young French girl, who was affected to tears when she received it, and ever after seemed very happy to meet the lady, whom she always called *The Bible Lady*.

In South Carolina, a poor lad, who was a cripple, and dependent upon the hand of charity for the supply of his wants, obtained half a dollar, which he offered for a Bible to one of the agents of the Society ; he related the fact to some of the officers of the Society, and they were so much interested in the youth, that they sent back the money with their kindest wishes for his present and eternal happiness. His whole time and thoughts seemed occupied with his Bible. In less than three months he read it through five times, and not long afterwards he died, triumphing in his Savior.

If any of you, my present hearers, have realized the luxury of carrying the Bible to the dwellings of honest poverty, and have witnessed the smile of gratitude light up the withered face of age, and the unrestrained overflowings

of joy and delight in youth and children, you have tasted of happiness as pure as you will ever find while sojourners in this vale of tears.

A friend of mine, who had received a quantity of Bibles for distribution, once attempted to describe his emotions, when a man far advanced in years, made application to him for a few Bibles and Testaments for a Sabbath school in a new and very poor settlement. He made two or three beginnings, but the recollection of the scene affected him to tears; after a while, however, I gathered the following particulars. The applicant walked ten miles to accomplish his object; but the gentleman had only a few Bibles on hand, and as all the region was suffering under "a famine of the word," he thought that justice to the whole neighborhood required him to refuse *giving more than one* for that Sabbath school. But the poor man received the impression that more could be obtained if money could be had, or even any article which could be turned into money at a market. In a few days the same feeble old man returned, with a *back load of*

shoes, which had been furnished by his neighbors, who were as poor or poorer than himself. He had read to them the Book of Life which he carried home on his first visit, and their anxiety increased as every new portion of it was read in their hearing. You will be pleased to hear that the gentleman could not any longer withhold his Bibles. He gave the old man a good supply, and wrote to the committee for more ; and he felt that however pleasant the service of Christ might be in other employments, he desired no greater honor or happiness, than to be instrumental of widely circulating the volume of inspiration.

I will mention but one more circumstance at this time, to awaken your sympathy, and urge you to engage in the like precious labors.

About three years after the formation of the National Bible Society, one of the distributors in the northern part of New England, called upon a poor family in which there were seven children. Their parents seemed very decent people, but they had not a scrap of a Bible in their habitation, and indeed that holy book had

never found an entrance there. After a long and tender conversation on the importance of religion, the gentleman inquired, if he left him a copy of the Scriptures, whether he would promise to read a portion of it daily to his family? With apparent honesty and frankness he promised, and it was afterwards ascertained that he faithfully kept his promise. The Lord smiled on his first feeble attempt to get heavenly wisdom, and commissioned the Holy Spirit to carry divine truth to his heart, and that of his wife, with saving power. They confessed and forsook their sins, and openly professed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; the family altar was speedily erected, from which incense and a pure offering ascended morning and evening with fervent constancy.

Who can look into eternity and see the results of that morning call and conversation of a Bible distributor with the father and mother of those seven little uninstructed children? Is there an individual present, of any age or condition, too poor to aid in shedding abroad the light of eternal life? Every one who has

health, and who will be industrious and practice economy and temperance, will have the means of aiding in the work.

Mr. Guildford requested his people to sing the Christian doxology, after which he pronounced the benediction, and the people dispersed.

How many thousand dollars worth of Bibles were distributed gratuitously in 1820? For what was that year distinguished? What prominent object was kept in view, through 1821 and 1822? During the first six years of the existence of the Society, how many Bibles and Testaments were printed, or purchased with its funds? Can you relate any anecdotes to illustrate the utility of Bible distribution? Do you recollect any instances of saving benefit?

CHAPTER IV.

“ Let earth, with every isle and sea
Rejoice—the Savior reigns !
His *Word* like fire prepares the way,
And mountains melt to plains.”

THE unexpected arrival of an endeared friend, more effectually recovered Mr. Guilford's spirits, which were apt to be depressed under any little indisposition, than all the compassion and medicine which Mrs. Eckley had lavished upon him for several days. He expressed his unfeigned pleasure in meeting an old friend, and manifested a grateful sense of the goodness of God in sending him assistance in the services of the sanctuary. It was agreed that Mr. S—— should present the claims of the American Bible Society in the morning, and request a meeting in the course of the week, of all persons disposed to form an auxiliary Bible Society in that town.

Mrs. Eckley was delighted at the prospect of forming a Bible association ; and it was her wish to have the gentlemen form a society, auxiliary to the National one, and have the ladies associate as an auxiliary to the gentlemen's society ; but it was not till after Richard and Philander had retired, that she named the subject. The little boys were so eager to hear more about the successes of the Bible society, and asked so many questions of Mr. S——, that, for half an hour, they engrossed almost the whole of his attention. Anxious to encourage every benevolent feeling, he related many facts that had come to his knowledge ; and among others, he told them of a poor widow in North Carolina, who loved her Bible so dearly, that at the sale of her husband's effects, when she was obliged to make choice between a *bed* and the *Bible*, not having money enough in the world to pay her debts and keep both, she took the Bible and gave up the bed, without a sigh !

Mrs. Eckley. Do you not think she was rewarded for her attachment to the book of God,

by a sweet and cheering sense of his special presence ?

Mr. S. Yes, I think she found her Bible worth more to her than a bed would have been without it. I often feel ashamed when I think how insensible I am to God's mercies ; a bed, a Bible, and a thousand other things come along as a matter of course to most of us. We lose a sense of the value of our blessings, by their abundance.

Mrs. Eckley. I fear we do not prize them as we should, were they " few and far between," for " blessings brighten as they take their leave."

Mr. Guildford. A dark comment upon our infirmities and depravity, brother S——.

By this time Philander, by little and little, had made his way close by the side of Mr. S——, who put his arm round the little boy, and after asking him a few questions, told him about a little Russian orphan boy, who went to the director of a school and asked for a Bible. The director wanted to know what he should do with it, and if he knew what it contained ;

the little boy replied, "I have heard that a great deal of good is written in it, and much about Christ."

"But who is Christ?" said the director.

"Our blessed Savior; and I should be glad to become acquainted with him," answered the poor orphan.

"But where do you hear any thing about him—can you read?"

The boy said, "Many of the workmen in our manufactory, go to the minister and get a book from him, which they afterwards read: I can read tolerably well. I work in the manufactory, and with my earnings, support myself, my mother, sister and a very little brother."

The kind director of the school was pleased to find such a good little boy, and after hearing him read enough to ascertain that he could read well, he asked who taught him? and he was answered,

"The workmen in the manufactory have given me a primer, and instructed me at times."

Then the director gave him a Bible, saying,

“Read it diligently, but always with prayer, and a heart turned towards the Lord.”

The little fellow thanked the gentleman, upon his knees, and ran away to a flight of stairs, and sat down a few minutes to read and admire his beautiful new Bible ; then he put it in his pocket, and ran home to tell the joyful tidings to his kind mother and sister. Mr. S—— added in a low voice, “Do you read your Bible with your heart towards the Lord.”

Philander. I try to read it so.

Mr. S. I hope you will always read it *diligently and with prayer*, according to the directions of the gentleman to the poor Russian orphan. Other boys besides him have expressed as much joy on receiving a Bible or Testament. The Highlanders, who live at Cape Breton, were [so anxious to obtain the sacred treasure, that they hired persons to go nearly a hundred miles to beg for it ; and when obtained, they sent their little boys and girls over the icy lakes, five or six miles, to be taught to read in them by some poor widows, who had learning.

Philander. Why did not their parents teach them ?

Mr. S. They had never learned to read themselves ; but they felt anxious to hear the Bible read by their children. I have known children to fret and cry because they had to go half a mile to school when there was very little snow and ice. When they hear about these little boys and girls who were thankful to go five or six miles on the ice to learn to read the Bible to their parents and neighbors, do you think they will complain of a little cold and snow in going half or even a whole mile to school ?

Philander. I should not think they would : I will not.

Mr. G. Children seldom understand the value and importance of their privileges, unless by contrasting their circumstances with the circumstances of those less favored. *We* should feel ourselves but poorly supplied with Bibles, if we had not one for every member of the family.

Mrs. S. I have sometimes thought, however, that in those places where the Bible is a

rare book, that as many persons in a neighborhood learned the truths it contained, as in some places where Bibles were very plenty. At one of the South Sea islands, after the natives had been so long instructed by missionaries as to furnish six thousand readers, there were only three hundred Bibles. But you might see them in clusters sitting in the shade of trees, with some one reading aloud in the Bible, or teaching others to read that holy book. On one occasion, when the missionaries had just received a fresh supply of Bibles, their house was immediately surrounded by such an immense crowd, all so earnest to get a book, that there seemed danger of overturning the building. At another neighboring island, three thousand copies of the Holy Scriptures were sold in a little time, for three gallons of cocoa oil apiece ; and it was supposed that as many as ten thousand copies might have been sold in a week or ten days at the same price, if they could have been procured.

Mr. G. These statements go to prove what I have long believed to be true, that whoever

desires a Bible out of love to its contents, would be willing to make greater sacrifices to obtain one than to obtain any earthly object.

Mrs. E. I am of your mind Mr. Guildford : nothing earth can yield would make a Christian happy if you deprive him of the Bible. A friend of mine told me that he had witnessed some very affecting instances of ardent love to the Bible, among the slaves at Demarara, who had been presented with Bibles by a few persons of benevolence. Unable to read themselves, they would run three or four miles to get a person to read them a few verses, whenever they could gain time, or obtain leave for that purpose.

Mr. G. How such facts rebuke our insensibility to the word of God ! Brother S——, do you not find it extremely difficult to convince people of the “famine of the word,” that exists in many portions of the world ?

Mr. S. I do indeed ; but sometimes when they are convinced, it seems as if their hearts melted almost instantaneously.

Mrs. E. I presume you often find the poor,

with hearts as large and compassionate as the rich.

Mr. S. Yes, I do frequently,—and I have found a few cases somewhat similar to the one related by an agent who was crossing some of the romantic mountains in Wales. The night overtook him once, near the dwelling of poor but pious widow, who kindly received him into her lowly dwelling. He talked much of what had been done by the Christian world, to spread abroad a savor of Christ's name, and what he hoped soon to see accomplished, but without the least expectation of her affording any assistance, for her poverty was such that concealment was impracticable. As he conversed, her eyes brightened for a moment, and then the tears fell, for her heart overflowed. When she had recovered, she said, “I have *two pence*, it may print *one verse perhaps*.” Her guest was much moved, and he said, “Suppose that it should be so that this *two pence* could print one verse, what verse should you like it should be?” After a little hesitation she answered, “*There shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and*

the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness."

Mr. G. One such incident must sweeten many a heavy hour in the life of an agent of our benevolent institutions.

Mr. S. And if any class of men need cheering events to encourage them to persevere in their self-denying labors, it must be such agents.

Mr. G. I am sometimes weary of answering objections made against the employment of agents. I am almost daily met with the remark, "The money spent to support an agent had better be expended for the purchase of Bibles, Tracts, or whatever object the agent is laboring to procure funds to sustain." I am not a little surprised to find some ministers so unwilling to bring agents before their people, to plead the cause of those who are perishing for the want of Bibles and preachers: my own experience accords with the words of my Savior, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and if I wished to promote the temporal happiness of my people, and their highest worldly

prosperity, I would afford them an opportunity to give to charitable objects frequently, and would urge them to give liberally and cheerfully. I have pursued this course so far without the least fear of lessening my own influence, or alienating their affections. But I am careful never to urge my people to go farther in *personal sacrifice* to promote the religion of Christ, than they see I go myself.

Mr. S. I think that is very important. If a Church and people see that their minister manifests a generous concern for the destitute at a distance, and gives to the extent of his means to supply their spiritual necessities, and cordially welcomes those persons employed by benevolent societies to raise funds, do you believe he would be less beloved and respected, or the provision for his support less abundant?

Mr. G. No, I do not. And as it respects the *expediency* of supporting agents, experience has fully taught us, that without them the community would never be aroused to look at the wants of a miserable world so as to systematize any plan to draw forth the resources and ac-

tive co-operation of the real friends of religion and benevolence. It has been said, with great truth I think, that "if a society is poor, that is a good reason why an agent should be employed." If proof were wanting, we might easily look back to the Bible Society, and the annual amount of funds before they employed agents, and afterwards. I intend to spread out before my people, both old and young, to the extent of my ability, their own moral wants and diseases, and those of heathen and nominally Christian lands; and, after setting forth the commandments, precepts, promises and example of the Lord Jesus Christ, leave them to act as reason and conscience shall dictate.

Mrs. E. As long as you do so, I believe you will find little cause of complaining that your Church is cold, worldly, formal or covetous.

Mr. S—— preached the next day for *Mr. Guildford*, in the morning and in the evening. He took for his text in the morning, the eighth verse of the first chapter of Joshua,—“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day

and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein, for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and thou shalt have good success."

He began by telling his hearers that the Bible was the *fountain head*, to which they must all resort for principles, precepts, commands, and encouragement in all their attempts to train up their families for God, and in all their efforts to ameliorate the condition of the human race, by advancing the cause of truth and holiness in the earth. He said with considerable vehemence, as he raised the Bible from the cushion,—the Bible is the *centre* around which Missionary, Tract, Sabbath School, Education, and all other similar associations revolve in delightful harmony. And to the worth of this blessed book, I wish to call your attention to-day, as well as to the "famine of the word," in a large portion of the habitable globe. Of the extent of this famine I fear but few are aware.

To convince you that I am not dealing in fictions, I will make a few statements from the

best authority, showing the real condition of many parts of the world, which is estimated to contain about nine hundred millions of souls. One whole generation of this immense multitude passes off the stage every thirty years ; and that every revolving year ushers as many as thirty-three millions into the presence of their Creator and Judge. Were we to attempt to enumerate the myriads that have been born, and died, and received their final sentence, how soon would numbers fail, and our minds feel their incapacity to grasp the mighty subject ? and yet such reflections are profitable—for the longer we contemplate, the more elevated are our conceptions of the majesty and glory of Jehovah, compared with our own littleness and insignificance. We feel astonished at the condescension of God, and with the Psalmist exclaim, “ Lord what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him ? ” And when we feel thus humbled and abased, how do our hearts rise and swell with gratitude, love, and praise ! It is then that we long to bring all our self-ruined fellow men to

know, love, adore, and obey our God and Redeemer. It is then that we feel the preciousness of the word of God, and bless him for the sacred treasure, while our hearts yearn over the millions who are groping their way down to the chambers of eternal night. We make intercessions for them with groanings which cannot be uttered—we watch for opportunities to send them the light of life—we look at our silver and gold, and independent of its value in sustaining these bodies and furnishing the means of comfort and salvation to a dying world, it is no more to us than the dust beneath our feet. It is then we begin to feel as we ought, and to live for eternity.

My hearers, let us look at a few distinct facts connected with the wants of the world. From the time the art of printing was discovered, to the establishment of Bible societies, it is not supposed that more than twenty-five millions of Bibles had ever been printed ; and it has even been estimated, by some gentlemen who have enjoyed good advantages for ascertaining the truth of most statements, that from the dis-

covery of the art of printing down to 1820, twenty-five millions of Bibles were the extent that ought to be counted. Now, only compare the nine hundred millions of souls on the earth with the *twenty-five* millions of Bibles ; then compute the number of Bibles that has been destroyed, and mutilated, or comparatively but little read ; and then remember that, in no other book has the salvation of the Gospel been revealed, and you must be startled at the thought, that so few of all the generations of the dead have heard of the atoning blood, or even the name of Jesus !

What have you done, my hearers, to increase the number of Bibles that have been added to the twenty-five millions printed before the year 1820 ? I would appeal to *you*, who are the professed followers of the Lamb,—you who have publicly taken the Bible for the rule of your faith and practice, and who feel assured that “ *there is no other name given under heaven and among men whereby we can be saved,*” but that of Jesus Christ : What have

you done to enlighten the ignorant, and to set their feet in the narrow way, by putting into their hands this only infallible guide to heaven? Let conscience answer. My friends, allow me to ask you what you will do in future, to bless the world with a knowledge of the word of God? The generations that have died in darkness, you cannot cheer with the light of life; their sentence has been sealed up to the day of doom. But there are about nine hundred millions of human beings to-day, *alive on the earth*, for whose salvation you may pray and labor. Of these, probably more than six hundred millions are still groping their way down to the gates of death. Will you not point them to the Lamb of God, and tell them there is balm in Gilead, and a physician there? The work is great, and calls for all your strength. It calls upon *you*, parents! to inculcate into the minds of your children the principles of the Gospel; to train them up in habits of industry, economy, and self-denial; to set before them an example of supreme at-

tachment to God ; and to show them that you aim to govern yourselves and them by the unerring rules of the Bible.

Do you live in a section of the land where any who bear sway, would banish this *book of life* from, or refuse its entrance into, seminaries of learning as a class book ? Exert all your powers to restore it to its former rank in colleges, academies, and common schools ; and if you hear the proud infidel assert the unfitness of the Bible to the circumstances and condition of schools, tell them that “ it contains more important history, more sound morality, more real poetry, and finer strains of eloquence, than all other books together.” Use all your vigilance to guard your dear children from yielding to a spirit of indifference and carelessness ; but strive to awaken their sensibilities in behalf of the destitute ; talk to them of their mercies, and the great sin of selfishness, in sitting down quietly to enjoy the rich privileges a merciful God has granted them, regardless of the cries of millions of undying souls, famishing for the bread of life, and the waters of salva-

tion. I call not only upon parents and children, but upon every class in the community, and plead with you to do with your might whatever your hands find to do in circulating the word of God. No mere politician can look down the vale of years and remain unconcerned—no true patriot can be indifferent to the Bible cause, for he sees that his country cannot retain her independence and republican form of government, any longer than she retains religion, knowledge, and virtue enough to secure self-government. As a nation we cannot long remain free, after having thrown off the restraints of the Bible. As parents and as patriots I urge you to look forward and see what America may be with the Bible for her guide, and what she will be if it is neglected in childhood, banished from our common schools, and not regarded as the only source of truth and duty, by those who govern and those who obey.

Will you take a hasty glance at those countries who have never enjoyed the blessings of a free government, and see the ignorance and misery of the inhabitants, and the dreadful

scarcity of the Holy Scriptures? Look at the Russian empire, with more than fifty-two millions of souls, and you will find that, from the year 1578 to 1812, a period of two hundred and thirty-four years, only sixty thousand copies of the Bible were circulated. Dr. Pinkerton said, in 1818, that an archbishop informed him that the *greater part of the clergy*, in a diocese containing four hundred and fifty churches, were, at that time, destitute of Bibles. And this, I presume, was a fair specimen of the condition of a large portion of the empire. In Georgia and Armenia, there are a large number of nominal Christians; but you may judge of their religious knowledge when you are informed, that in all their two thousand churches, less than two hundred Bibles could be found in 1814! The archbishop primate of Sweden, ascertained that in one diocese seven persons out of eight were found destitute of the Scriptures, and that diocese was in one of the richest provinces in the kingdom. He said that among the peasantry it was rare to find a grown person unable to read; that in the earlier part

of his life, in the two parishes under his charge, containing between three and four thousand souls, only one adult was found who could not read, and he was a poor soldier. This is the more remarkable, as in that country there are few schools for the poorer classes, but this deficiency is supplied by the mothers; it being customary among the Swedish cottagers for the mother to be the sole teacher of her children, however numerous, until they approach maturity. To impart instruction in the higher branches, traveling schoolmasters go from place to place, stopping three or four months, and teaching all who wish to avail themselves of the opportunity, and then pass to another section of country.

Do you ask, "If they could read, why did they neglect the Bible?" Because they were not to be had. Suppose the whole world should rise up at once, and ask for a Bible, where could the supply be found? O my friends, they could not be found. Multitudes are now calling for this precious volume, who cannot be furnished till you supply the means

to print and bind them ; and will you not listen to the cry of those who are perishing with spiritual famine ? Will not your hearts yearn over the destitute in your own town, state and country ? True benevolence longs and labors, weeps and prays for the recovery of a lost world ; it prompts the children of God to rally around the cross of Christ, and like a band of brothers, unite to send the messages of mercy revealed in the book of God to every nation, kingdom, and people under the whole heaven.

Fear not to engage in this glorious enterprise, for you shall come off conquerors, and more than conquerors, for the mouth of the Lord hath said, “ The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters fill the seas.” The flame of Christian benevolence which now burns so brightly in many parts of the world, has been increasing for thirty or forty years, and it will burn brighter and brighter,—for it was kindled from the fire of God’s altar, and can never be extinguished. This tide of holy love will rise and swell, till every heart shall melt, and every hand bear a

liberal offering to the feet of Jesus. Then his word shall soon be read in every language, and his glory shine over the whole earth.

Let not the present ignorance and misery of a *world lying in wickedness* appall you—let no obstacles, which Satan and wicked men may oppose to baffle your designs, discourage you, for *God is on our side*, and who can be against us?

Can you mention any portions of the United States, that are destitute of Bibles? How many Bibles were printed from the invention of the art of printing to 1820? How many Bibles have been printed since 1820? How many people are there now living on the earth? How many ignorant of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Scriptures? How many Bibles were circulated in the Russian empire, from 1578 to 1812? In the two thousand Churches of Georgia and Armenia, how many Bibles in 1814?

CHAPTER V.

“ Shout aloud—and hail the Savior !
Jesus, Lord of all proclaim !
As ye triumph in his favor,
All ye lands declare his fame ;
Loud rejoicing—
Shout the honors of his name ! ”

DURING the intermission, Mrs. Eckley expressed her surprise and sorrow at the ignorance and darkness of the human race, and bewailed her past unconcern, and want of compassion for poor sinners, with so much frankness and feeling, that Mr. S—— felt greatly encouraged in the belief that she would take a very active part in the concerns of the Bible Society which was to be formed. Mr. Guildford preferred to have his friend preach upon some topic not immediately connected with the Bible Society in the evening, which Mr. S—— was happy to do, and he took these words,

“ Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.”

At the close of the afternoon service, Mr. Guildford appointed a meeting of his Bible class immediately after tea, on Thursday afternoon, previous to the formation of the auxiliary Bible Society. In the evening of the Sabbath, Charlotte and her brothers seemed unhappy, and expressed a wish to have a little society to meet weekly, for the sole purpose of reading the Scriptures together. Mrs. Eckley said, “ I have long thought of such a thing, and why might not a reading circle be formed of the young and middle aged in this neighborhood? Do you not think, Mr. Guildford, if properly conducted, it would promote our edification ?

Mr. G. I have known such *reading meetings* productive of much good, and should rejoice to see my whole congregation feel interested to promote them ; but I should hope that some discreet, pious lady might meet with the children’s reading circle, for I think all such

meetings should be opened and closed with prayer.

Mr. S. Would not such associations for studying the word of God be useful in new settlements, where the institutions of the Gospel have never been established?

Mr. G. I cannot doubt it, for I am acquainted with a neighborhood where a considerable number of persons were occupied in trade, and manufacturing establishments, several miles distant from any place of worship. A lady came to spend part of a summer in this place, and her spirit was stirred within her as she saw the multitudes of idle men and children sauntering from place to place on the holy Sabbath. She spoke to several of the most intelligent gentleman and ladies upon the subject of meeting together every Sabbath, to read the Bible, sing and pray, and hear a sermon read. They consented to try the experiment, and a meeting was appointed at the school house. A merchant read a sermon, and sometimes prayed extempore, but commonly read prayers, and another gentleman took the

lead in the singing ; and from that day, public worship was never omitted in that place ; and within two years a Church was gathered, a house of worship erected, and well filled with serious worshipers. The same lady raised a Sabbath school of fifty or sixty children, and procured nearly thirty dollars' worth of books. Many of them have since become pious, and united with the same Church.

Mr. S. I presume there are hundreds of neighborhoods in the Western States, where a similar course might be pursued with as good success ; and surely those who engage in such a work, will find their own happiness increased by their efforts to promote good morals and religion among others. No doubt there was a great change in the external appearance of the people in the village you have described.

Mr. G. Yes, there was an astonishing change for the better, in almost every family, especially in the article of dress. Neatness and, in not a few instances, a degree of taste took the place of careless indifference. New family arrangements were made, which greatly

added to the comfort and respectability of many a household.

Charlotte. I never felt so much as if I could be useful, as I have done to-day, Mr. Guildford. I long to have our Bible Society organized.—Do you think we shall collect much money?

Mr. G. Perhaps you may not the first year; but if you are diligent and persevering, Charlotte, you cannot fail of success. One little circle, smaller than yours will be, I presume, met and labored year after year to purchase and circulate the Scriptures; and the last I heard from them, the whole amount raised by them was four hundred dollars!

Philander. I should be willing to work a great many years to get four hundred dollars worth of Bibles to give to the poor.—How much ought I to give, Mr. Guildford?

Mr. G. I cannot tell you how much, Philander; you know the Bible assures us, that “He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man ac-

ording as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*, not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

Richard. I shall have so little to give, I do not suppose it will do any good. Charlotte says I cannot give more than a dollar a year.

Mr. G. Richard, will you take this Testament, and read the four first verses of the twenty-first chapter of Luke, and tell me what you think of those who refuse to give anything in religious charity, because they are too poor to give much.

Richard found it and read, “And he looked up, and saw the rich casting their gifts into the treasury. And he saw a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And he said, of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all. For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God; but she of her penury, hath cast in all the living that she had.”

Philander. What did that poor widow gain by her charity?

Mr. G. The promises of her Savior, that

her reward should not be lost. The fresh proof she had of the sincerity of her love to the cause of God, was sufficient reward; and I think it probable that her comfort and happiness were much increased. I hope, Richard, you are convinced that it is as much your duty and privilege to give a little to circulate the Scriptures, as it would be to give large sums if you were rich?

Richard. It appears the Bible proves that it is equally so; I am very glad I know it.

Mr. S. I have known some very poor children give with great liberality. A little boy saved all the cents he could get for a long time and spent them all for a Bible—a gentleman asked him if he would not be sorry when fruit was ripe, that he had spent all his money. The child answered, “Oh no, what we eat is soon gone, but the word of the Lord endureth forever.”

Mr. G. I have known several interesting cases of children, who have manifested very great regard for the Bible, and anxiety to bring their ignorant friends forward in their learning,

so that they might enjoy the pleasure of reading it.

Mrs. E. Do let us hear any anecdotes you may have treasured up, gentlemen, for they serve to quicken and encourage me in duty more than exhortation and reasoning ; and I always observe they take a deep hold of children.

Mr. G. The child I had in my mind, when I began my remarks, lived in Kentucky with her grandmother, a pious woman of color, who was ignorant of letters. A Sabbath school commenced, and the little girl began to read her a b c. She went home delighted, and taught her grandmother all she herself had learned ; and she did the same from one Sabbath to another, each succeeding week bringing the grandmother to the point to which she had attained, until they could both manage monosyllables, when the old lady came to the words, Lord and God, in an ecstasy of joy she exclaimed, “ *My Lord and my God*—this is the name of my Lord and my God,”—the tears flowing all the while as she turned over

the leaves, and discovered the name of her God and Savior.

Mrs. E. O Richard, how much you and other children have to be thankful for, who have a good school through the week and a Sabbath school besides.

Richard. Aunt Eckley, I do feel thankful for a school and a Bible ; but I did not use to think but what schools and Bibles were as plenty all the world over, as here.

Mr. S. But you now find this is a great mistake. I fear multitudes think as little about the destitute as you did. Thousands of children are to be found, even in America, who never saw a Bible in the home of their infancy—who never saw one in the hands of their parents, and who have looked upon one with wonder, when a distributor has brought it to their father's dwelling.

Philander. Why do not those parents who can read, get Bibles for their families ?

Mr. S. Some of those destitute parents are able, but not willing—some are willing, but not able—and some are neither able or willing.

When children and youth unite to form a Bible association, it is surprising how much they always accomplish. There was one formed in one of the eastern States a few years ago, that embraced nearly two hundred children, all under fifteen years of age. One year they raised forty dollars, and twenty of the association became hopefully pious, the same year. Their friends made them *save* or *earn* all their subscriptions, and many of the little ones had to work a long time to *earn* their money, but they were far happier than those children who spend their time in idleness and folly, without trying to do any good in the world.

Charlotte. I long to have the day arrive, for our association to be organized.

Philander. So do I. I would do any kind of work to get money to buy Bibles and Testaments for some of those poor children who have never had one.

Mr. S. I heard, a short time since, of two brothers who became pious about the same time. Afterwards they were so much attached

to the Bible, and so anxious to supply the destitute, that one of them proposed to fat his *steer*, and with the money the butcher should pay for it, procure Bibles for the poor. His brother approved of the plan, and agreed to fat, kill, and sell his for the same object. When they got their money together, they sent it to the American Bible Society, to constitute themselves and their pastor members for life.

Mr. G. That was an action worthy the consideration and imitation of hundreds who might spare a cow or an ox for charitable purposes, without sacrificing a single comfort of life.

Mr. S. And if these hundreds should ask these brothers whether they were less happy, or felt poorer for making such a generous offering to the Lord, what do you suppose they would say?

Mr. G. That the same sum could not have added as much to their comfort, if it had been spent in luxurious food or raiment, as in putting

the word of God into the hands of those who were perishing for lack of vision.

Mr. S. Perhaps some of the Bibles purchased with the money paid for those *steers* will make as many happy as the *Testament* did, which a few years ago was carried to a Bohemian village. A pious gentleman was traveling in that country, and after retiring for the night, at an inn, he felt some surprise at hearing many persons singing the praises of God. In the morning he inquired of the landlord respecting it, and was informed that a New Testament had lately come to their village, and since that time a flame of devotion had been kindled, and little assemblies of Christian people had been held statedly.

Charlotte. If one Testament produced such an effect to make people good, what might not those be who are surrounded by Bibles and Testaments?

Mr. G. They might, and undoubtedly would be very holy persons, if they read and practised the rules of God's word, with as deep

interest and fidelity, as did those Bohemian villagers. When we hear of such results from simply reading the Scriptures, we feel astonished, because our minds are so faintly impressed with the fact, that it is the *truths of God*, either read or preached that makes wise unto salvation. If we cherished the belief, that wherever the truths of the Gospel are spread out clearly before the minds of the people, they would be accompanied by the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, should we not say and do a hundred fold more than we ever have done, to supply the lamentable deficiency that exists even in the most favored portions of the world?

Charlotte. Do you not think that New England is, generally speaking, well supplied.

Mr. G. "*Facts are stubborn things,*" and they testify, that even our boasted New England, which has been emphatically called *the garden of the Lord*, contains scarcely a parish or town without more or less destitute families.

Eight or ten years ago, there were more

than ten thousand families in the State of Maine, destitute of a Bible !

In New Hampshire, less than ten years ago, in three counties, nearly three thousand families were found destitute of a whole Bible, and probably those counties were as well supplied as most others. Massachusetts will not deny that, in all her societies, parishes, towns, and districts, a much greater deficiency was ascertained after examination, than any one had anticipated ; and Connecticut, Vermont, and Rhode Island, are no better supplied than Massachusetts. Ten years ago, nearly ten thousand readers were destitute of the inspired volume, in one county in the State of New York, and that was not mentioned as an example of destitution. In New Jersey—the small State of New Jersey—after the labors of more than thirty Bible Societies for many years, *seven thousand families were found destitute of any portions of the word of God*, in 1827. In some towns and counties, the agents were ridiculed for expressing the opin-

ion that many families were not in possession of a Bible ; but after investigation their ridicule was changed for amazement at the result. In one place, a gentleman of great information, said he thought not more than fifty or sixty Bibles could be needed ; it was ascertained that more than four hundred were wanted ; and almost every part of the United States was found to require a far greater supply than even the best informed had imagined.

Mr. S. It was just so in the old world, for many years after the British and Foreign Bible Society had been in operation. Multitudes there, as well as here, could not believe the Bible was such a scarce book, in a great part of the world. I recollect a clergyman in South Carolina, who once opposed Bible Societies, after examining the families in the four Churches that he supplied, was amazed at the famine of Bibles that prevailed, and he declared that not more than one third of them had a Bible in their houses !

Philander. Do you know any other place where pious people live without the Bible ?

Mr. S. I hardly know whether we ought to consider a person pious who lives without a Bible, in this country, if he is able to read, unless he is incapacitated for labor. And yet I have heard of heads of families in Kentucky, who have been professors of religion twenty years, and could read, who had no Bible. The agent said that he supposed *two-thirds of the families* he had visited were without Bibles throughout the country. He seemed to think their poverty was an excuse, for no one ultimately refused to accept one gratuitously.

Mrs. E. If Christians do not supply the wants of these poor ignorant people after these facts are known to them, I should feel as much disposed to question their piety, as I should those professors you have named, who have lived without the Bible twenty years.

Charlotte. Aunt Eckley, money will flow freely, I am sure it will, whenever these facts are known. If we do not know of existing evils, how can we remedy them? and such as I have heard to-night, I should think would awaken compassion in the breast of the most unfeeling.

Philander. I long to find out whether there are any families without the Bible, *here*.

Richard. Mr. Guildford, may I inquire, after the Bible Society is formed?

Mr. G. Yes, we shall have something for all to do, who are willing to labor in the Bible cause.

Charlotte. I think I am willing to do whatever you consider proper, to promote the good work, though perhaps the help of young ladies will not be wanted.

Mr. G. Yes, Charlotte, you may do a great deal of good among the young ladies in the Society, in searching out the wants of the poor in this neighborhood, for surely we have a good share of such, and you know who has said, "Ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will, ye may do them good."

Mr. S. It is as much binding on women, as men, to believe and obey the Gospel, and I think they have as much encouragement in the service of Christ, as men. I believe those females who most resemble Mary, Lydia, Priscilla, Tryphena, and Tryphosa, mentioned with

honor in the Gospel, will be most likely to please God and benefit the world. If you and your young associates feel interest enough in the cause of religion to ascertain the real condition of your fellow men, your sympathies will continually rise higher and higher, and your hearts will melt as you compare the privileges and mercies conferred upon you, with the state of multitudes in this land of light. I was told, a few years since, that in Florida, it was not difficult to find *Americans* who had resided there twenty and thirty years without seeing a Bible! Doubtless many would have been glad to purchase one, but the time has been, that there was not a Bible to be found for sale in any bookstore in the city of New Orleans—though the times are now rapidly changing in that quarter, and altogether for the better. The Bible is now more talked of, and I hope more extensively read throughout our land, than it was twenty years ago.

Richard. Are not the people generally very wicked, where there are few Bibles?

Mr. S. Yes, Richard, they are very wick-

ed. Some time ago, a Bible distributor stepped on board a boat, lying near the shore of one of the great rivers at the west, and walked up to a circle of young men who were using very profane language, and said, with considerable earnestness, "I am looking for a boatman who can swear, get drunk, and profane the Sabbath, and who never read the Testament." In a moment all disappeared save one. "Are you the man I was looking for?" said the gentleman. The fellow bowed his head, and the distributor then inquired if he had never read the Bible; being answered in the negative, he asked if he had been taught to read? The young man said he could read. "Then here is a Testament for you," said the gentleman. The poor fellow stepped forward to take it, trembling like a leaf, and listened to a most solemn exhortation, with much apparent feeling. The gentleman left him, and was gratified to see him retire to a little distance, and sit down to read it with great seriousness.

Mrs. E. If we do not commence our Bible operations in this village, with vigor enough to

insure success, I am sure I cannot plead ignorance of facts to enlighten and encourage me.

Charlotte. No aunt, I think men, women, and children, *here*, will be without excuse after Mr. Guildford's next meeting, if they do not all engage in circulating the Scriptures to the extent of their ability.

Mr. G. I cannot express the anxiety I feel for some of the most amiable and interesting part of my congregation, lest, having toiled to procure the records of heaven for others, they should fail of an interest in the *great salvation* themselves.

As he said this, he fixed his full dark eye upon Charlotte, with a countenance expressive of tenderness and concern. The starting tear and look of distress, convinced him that what he had several days suspected respecting the state of Charlotte's mind was true, for it was evident that his remark went directly to her heart.

Mr. Guildford had set his aim high as a minister of Christ ; he felt a wrestling spirit for a revival of pure and undefiled religion in his con-

gregation ; and he had been watching to see some intimation of approaching good in the members of Mrs. Eckley's family, and his hopes had been greatly strengthened within a few days.

He wished to have Mr. S—— return and assist in the organization of the auxiliary Society, the next Thursday, but his engagements not permitting, he furnished a copy of a constitution* which had been very highly approved.

How many families were, a few years since, destitute of a Bible in the State of Maine ? In only three counties of New Hampshire, how many destitute families ? How many *readers* in one county of the State of New York, were without the Bible ten years ago ? How many destitute families in New Jersey, in 1827 ?

* See Appendix.

CHAPTER VI.

“ I love the volume of thy word ;
What light and joy these beams afford
To souls benighted and distressed !
Thy precepts guide my doubtful way ;
Thy fear forbids my feet to stray :
Thy promise leads my heart to rest.”

A LARGE assembly convened to hear Mr. Guildford continue the history of the American Bible Society. He rose, and after a few prefatory remarks, said, “ The report of the society in 1823, announced to the public the erection of a house for a Depository of the Bibles belonging to the institution. It was fifty feet in front, and more than a hundred feet in depth, but not of the same width as the front. This spacious building accommodated the keeper’s family on the basement. The first floor in front was occupied by the Agent, and the Biblical Library, and offices for the Treasurer, Sec-

retaries, and Committees, besides a room sixty by twenty-eight feet, capable of holding one hundred thousand Bibles arranged on shelves. The Managers' room is on the second story, in front, forty-eight feet long, twenty or thirty wide, and sixteen in height. This room is very neatly furnished. The rear of the second and third stories are devoted to the binder of the Bibles, and a depository of printed sheets. The Society's printers occupy the upper story. The whole expense incurred for this house was about twenty-two thousand dollars, eight or nine thousand of which was furnished by generous individuals, for the express purpose of erecting such a building. The peculiar advantages of having the whole business of the establishment transacted under the same roof, must be obvious to any person at all acquainted with the utility of systematic arrangements in conducting so large a concern. After the anniversary, in the spring of 1822, the yellow fever broke out with desolating fury, and checked the operations of the press for a time, and indeed before the next winter, it occasioned a total sus-

pension of business. However, during that year, more than fifty thousand Bibles and Testaments were printed and mostly circulated ; yet the cry of the poor and needy continued to wax louder and louder, from every part of the land. So many new auxiliary societies were recognized that year as to make in the whole, no less than three hundred and sixty. The ladies and others who had made efforts to collect money, added large sums to the treasury, which had been received from Churches, congregations, and individuals, to make their pastors life members or life directors of the parent society. This practice has met with universal approbation, and confers honor upon themselves, their minister, and the Church, and sets an example that has been followed with pleasant results in almost every instance, and which I hope will be generally imitated.

The growing zeal of females in the Bible cause during that year, was productive of immense good, for they stirred up the minds of a vast multitude to purchase Bibles for themselves and their children, who, it is probable,

would otherwise have remained contentedly destitute. Young men also were induced to come forward and pledge themselves to lend their assistance in carrying forward the designs of the institution. The young men in the city of Washington employed a missionary to ascertain the number of the destitute within its limits. Many families were found without Bibles, about half of whom were able to purchase ; and it was the opinion of the missionary that about one quarter of the whole would have bought a Bible, if it had been carried to their houses. The young men in Baltimore, New York, Boston, and most of our large cities, discovered a noble spirit in supplying the destitute with the word of life.

The business of the Society was conducted with energy and success during the years 1824 and 1825. The Managers experienced large measures of brotherly love, and their mutual confidence, esteem, and attachment very sensibly increased. They found that the facility with which personal intercourse could be carried on among the conductors of the institution,

after the completion of the Depository, added much to their happiness and usefulness—quite as much as the most sanguine had anticipated. A new stereotype edition of the New Testament, in large type, for the convenience of the aged, was struck off, and a larger number of Spanish Bibles and Testaments were distributed than in any former year. At Lima, in South America, five hundred Bibles and the same number of Testaments were disposed of in two days,—all sold at full price! In that extensive country it has been estimated that there are fifteen millions of people, nearly all of whom are destitute of the sacred Oracles. A Bible agent who explored that country, said, that from Buenos Ayres to Chili, with the exception of Mendoza, not a Bible was to be found. Even in the magnificent city of Mexico, it was not supposed there was one Bible to two hundred families. From what quarter of the world shall South America look for the light of heaven to shine upon her, if not through the benevolent agency of the United States? How easily could our national Bible institution

pour the Word of Life over all those infant Republics, and the neighboring West India islands, if the friends of the Most High felt the weight of obligation which they owe to him for the gifts of his word and his Son. My friends—were the question propounded to you, whether South America should be furnished with the Gospel from Europe or the United States, would not every man, woman, and child, rise up at once and reiterate, “From the United States! The American Bible Society shall be the honored instrument of communicating light, joy, and Gospel blessings to every portion of the American continent.” Yes, my friends, I must believe you would join my voice in this assertion, and that with me you will unite in efforts to enable that Society to accomplish these enlarged desires of our hearts.

Just before the anniversary of 1824, the Managers received an official statement that a Bible Society, auxiliary to the parent Society, had been formed in the new State of Illinois, which enabled them to report a Bible Society in every State in the Union.

The more diligent the search to ascertain the want of Bibles in the best supplied portions of the country, the more deplorable and numerous were found the instances of destitution. In the city of New York, the head quarters of Bible operations, after the distribution of so many thousand Bibles, there were found in one ward more than two hundred and sixty families without a Bible; and in another, over three hundred and twenty families equally destitute. These families contained twelve hundred and sixty-five souls, above ten years of age, who could read! A county Bible Society in the same State, ascertained that, in one town, a thousand families were entirely destitute. Facts might be multiplied to almost any number, showing the deplorable condition of the southern and western States, so far as the destitution of Bibles can make a place deplorable. But I have mentioned enough to convince you of the importance of increasing diligence and liberality among all the friends of the Bible cause.

The Bible is ordained, by its almighty Author, to be the instrument by which the world

is to be enlightened, sanctified, and saved ; and my dear people, I do entreat you, as good citizens, as lovers of your country, to gird up the loins of your minds, and do with your might all that your hands find to do, to perpetuate the ordinances and institutions of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to promote the salvation of the world.

In 1825, the Managers made strenuous efforts to ascertain the wants of every portion of the United States. As soon as their wants were discovered, they were promptly supplied through the auxiliaries, so far as their funds would allow. The naval and military posts were extensively furnished with Bibles and Testaments ; and a new impulse was given to the public, by the spirited resolutions made at a public meeting in Rochester, N. Y. A few gentlemen pledged themselves to furnish every destitute family with a Bible in the county of Monroe, either at full, part price, or gratuitously. They sent an agent into every school district, to ascertain its wants, and as the result, twelve hundred destitute families were furnish-

ed with the Scriptures. All denominations harmoniously engaged in this enterprise, and almost every individual had an opportunity to prove whether it was more blessed to give than to receive. They raised the necessary sum without the least difficulty, and if all the people in the Union should adopt their plan, the whole of our population might be supplied with the word of God within a few months, if Bibles could be prepared in sufficient quantities.

The various college auxiliaries, and those of female associations, sent very encouraging reports, which gave so many facts, proving their increasing numbers and usefulness, that the Managers, and all who witnessed their persevering and efficient labors, were filled with gratitude and admiration.

The Managers stated in their *tenth* report (1826,) that their receipts exceeded any preceding year more than six thousand dollars, and they circulated nearly four thousand more Bibles and Testaments than in any other year from the commencement of their operations. Between two and three thousand Spanish

Bibles were circulated that year. Calls the most urgent were heard from various sections of South America, and though the Board of Managers were unable to answer all these importunate solicitations for Bibles, yet they felt animated and encouraged by the repeated assurances of great good having been effected by those copies which had previously been circulated in that country.

That year was distinguished by the indefatigable labors of the Rev. Louis Dwight, and other Christian philanthropists of a kindred spirit, in the investigation of prisons and penitentiaries. These receptacles of misery and crime, were, through their instrumentality, enlightened by the torch of Divine truth, and it is to be hoped some were brought into the liberty wherewith Christ makes free. The treasury of the National Society was replenished by the generous donations of the living and the legacies of the dying, to a considerable amount. The proper officers of the Society, availed themselves of every opportunity in their power, to obtain a knowledge of every channel through

which the Bible might be introduced into the infant Republics of South America, and every part of Mexico, whose population is estimated at about seven millions. The demand for the Spanish Scriptures was unusually great, and though many obstacles opposed their entrance, yet they were happy to find new openings for their admission, and they were often astonished to see how soon every difficulty vanished, when they engaged with resolution to overcome them.

The office of Secretary had never been permanently supplied till the year 1826, when the the Rev. John C. Brigham was appointed, and entered upon his duties in September of that year.

The income of the Society for 1827, amounted to more than sixty-four thousand seven hundred dollars. A few liberal gentlemen in the city of New York, opened a subscription to raise money to cancel the debt which had been contracted for the Society's house ; it was soon filled, the debt was discharged, and the institution was in the undisturbed possession of all

those fine buildings, without having expended a cent of the funds appropriated to diffuse the Scriptures through this land and the whole world. When the Depository was finished in every part, it was worth twenty-five thousand dollars at least.

The business of the Bible Society had become so extensive, that another house became necessary, and a subscription was opened, and a sum raised sufficient to erect a very commodious building of a smaller size than the first.

The citizens of New York, have manifested a spirit of liberality and Christian munificence highly honorable to themselves, their city, and State, and richly they deserve the confidence and gratitude of all their fellow helpers in the cause of truth and universal happiness. Between seventy and eighty thousand copies of the Bible and Testament in English and German, were printed or purchased that year, which added to those previously printed or purchased since the formation of the Society, swelled the number to almost seven hundred thousand in ten years! I presume some may be led to think, the world

by this time must be nearly supplied with Bibles. A few facts may help to lead you to a more correct conclusion. I think I have before stated that the population of the globe is estimated at about nine hundred millions, and that there cannot be more than forty or fifty millions of Bibles in the world at the present time. But as I wish to call your attention particularly to the United States, I will observe that our present population is supposed to be about fifteen millions, which increases at least four hundred thousand annually. A thousand foreign emigrants are supposed to be added to our numbers every week ; and the natural population is a thousand a day, which if correct, would give us an increase of four hundred and seventeen thousand annually, instead of four hundred thousand. I trust every person before me is ready to say, that every reader in the land ought to possess a Bible ; and whoever imagines that the average duration of all the Bibles which have ever been printed exceeds thirty years, I believe is laboring under a mistake. Now, if we contemplate the swelling

tide of emigration—the formation of new families, and the rapid decay of Bibles, what can we say for ourselves in justification of our past sloth and supineness? You behold the wants, the necessities, the nakedness and sterility of your beloved country, occasioned by the scarcity, I had almost said the famine of the word of God, which in many portions of it so alarmingly prevail.

Fathers and brethren, What will you say, what will you do to supply the sad and lamentable deficiency? Mothers and sisters, Do you realize that the Bible is “the charter of your sex against degradation and oppression?” You *have freely received*, will you not *as freely give*? The day has long since passed by, when females are reproached for exceeding the bounds which a becoming delicacy has prescribed, when they enlist in the cause of Bible, Missionary, and Education Societies, with energy and resolution. I do not believe the Holy Scriptures furnish one sentence that debars you from sharing with us alike in the labor, and the rewards of this work of love. Your help is

needed, it is desired; and who will doubt that your happiness will be enhanced in proportion to your zeal and self-denying diligence in carrying or sending the glad tidings of salvation to the poor and ignorant? In England, female exertions have been crowned with astonishing success. The Ladies' Branch Bible Society of Liverpool, raised more than *thirteen thousand dollars* the first year of its existence. Let their example stimulate you to engage with similar affection and zeal, and prove to the world that you are actuated by the same spirit that glowed in the breasts of those females who were last at the cross, and earliest at the grave, of their and your crucified and risen Savior.

Beloved members of the Sabbath school,—I would speak to you, lest you should think you have no part or lot in this matter. In the Bible enterprize, the wisdom of age, and the vigor of youth may find constant employment. Facts in abundance may be adduced to prove the expediency, practicability, and happy results of Bible associations in Sabbath schools, and Bible

classes. Their number is rapidly increasing in New England and some of the middle and southern States. A spirit of emulation and enterprize, and I would hope of Christian compassion and benevolence, in all the Sabbath schools in the United States, has been increasing for the last few years, which promises glorious things for our American Zion. From these nurseries of the Church, the Bible has gone forth to bless multitudes of those who *go down to the sea in ships, and do business upon the great deep*, as well as those who have long been sitting in the region and shadow of death in Popish, Mohammedan, and Pagan lands.

My friends,—I will again call your attention to the efforts of our National Society, and give you a brief abstract of its doings from 1827 to 1831. The entire revenue for 1828, amounted to almost seventy-six thousand dollars. Twenty-one life directors and life members were added; and fifty-one auxiliaries were recognized this year.

A large edition of Bibles and Testaments, with small type, were struck off for the use of

Sabbath schools, furnished at a lower rate than any former edition. The public were presented with the Bible operations of every State in the Union. In Massachusetts, the number of societies, auxiliary to the American Bible Society, was twenty-four—in Maine, thirteen—New Hampshire had but *one* directly auxiliary, but that one had a multitude of branches, both male and female. Vermont had five, with many efficient branches: united they nobly undertook to supply all the destitute within the limits of the State. Rhode Island had five, all active and very useful. Connecticut, twenty-five. The one connected with Yale College, labored with great zeal, and they concluded to appropriate their funds to the distribution of Bibles in Spanish America.

In the State of New York, there were one hundred and eight auxiliaries, eight of which explored and supplied all the destitute within their bounds. New Jersey had thirty. One of them, the Nassau-Hall Bible Society, resolved to supply every destitute family in the State; the others soon co-operated with it, and wonderful as it may

seem, before the year had half expired, the work was completed, with the exception of one or two towns. Do you ask, How such a work could be done in so short a time? I answer—the *young men* volunteered their services, and performed more than they promised—the *Churches prayed and made willing and noble offerings*. The *ministers of Christ* encouraged old men, women, and children to come up to the help of the Lord, and counselled the young men, and labored with them—then the arm of the Lord was revealed—and *seven thousand families* were supplied.

In Pennsylvania, the parent Society had thirty-four auxiliaries, besides the Philadelphia Society, which is not auxiliary, though a noble institution. The *young men* of Philadelphia directed their sympathies and efforts towards the republics of South America. Delaware formed some auxiliaries, but, in 1830, there was a *great* work to be performed in that *small* State. Maryland had twenty-three auxiliaries. The “Young Men’s Bible Society of Baltimore,” passed a resolution to furnish every destitute

family in the State with a copy of the Scriptures within a year. The District of Columbia had five auxiliaries. The *Young Men's Society* in the city of Washington, after exploring and supplying their own wants, pledged themselves to aid four adjoining counties in Maryland. Virginia embraced forty-five auxiliaries, some of which were quite efficient.

North Carolina contained thirty-two auxiliaries; a few only have continued active from their commencement. It is supposed that eight or ten thousand families in that State, live, without one leaf of the Bible to enlighten or cheer them on their way to eternity. This evil has been deeply mourned over by the friends of truth there, and they have made repeated efforts to remove it, but have almost fainted at times in view of the opposition and general indifference with which they have had to contend. Thirty auxiliaries were recognized in South Carolina. That of Charleston, was numbered with the most energetic and useful connected with the parent institution. The State of Georgia, at different times previous to 1830,

formed in all about thirty-four auxiliaries. Those at Augusta and Milledgeville distributed large numbers of the Scriptures, and a female auxiliary at St. Mary's, expressed ardent desires to furnish the word of God to all the destitute. Ohio was very actively engaged in the Bible cause, and numbered fifty-one auxiliaries. Kentucky had twenty-four. In February, 1828, a meeting was held at Lexington, and a "resolution was proposed and carried, to raise twenty thousand dollars in that State, for the exclusive purpose of circulating the Holy Scriptures." No one lifted his voice against it, and many tears fell on the occasion. Seventeen hundred dollars towards that object, were subscribed before the meeting dispersed.

In Tennessee, ten auxiliaries were formed, but they were not as much interested as seemed necessary, considering the wants of the State. Military gentlemen did, perhaps, quite as much, if not more, than any other class of persons. In ten captains' companies, more than one family in six were destitute of Bibles or Testaments.—Indiana had twenty-nine auxiliaries, from which

a very few incidents of an encouraging nature were received—complaints of poverty and indifference were very frequent.—Illinois counted twenty-one auxiliaries, but the one in Bond county distinguished itself for the noble zeal it exhibited from its organization. All, or nearly all of the families within its bounds were supplied.—Missouri had sixteen auxiliaries, but a small part of them it was feared, did according to their ability; however, money was a very *scarce* article in most of the new States at the West.—Alabama had seven. Some of the officers of these auxiliaries, manifested an excellent spirit, and the hope was reasonably entertained, that more vigorous efforts would soon be made there.

The *two* auxiliaries in the State of Mississippi, were instrumental of much good—much, very much, however, still remained to be done in that State. Louisiana had one auxiliary, but it was doubtful whether any other in the United States could exert such an influence in favor of the cause as this, if it improved to the utmost its great advantages.—Michigan formed three,

though the members of these auxiliaries were very few in number, yet the work commenced, and new channels were continually opening, through which future distribution could be made. One auxiliary was formed in the territory of East Florida, and a few Catholics manifested a desire to obtain the Holy Scriptures. A small sum of money was received from this society.

In the years 1829 and 1830, a remarkable impulse was given to the operations of the Society, and success seemed to follow every effort made by the friends of the cause, however feeble. The receipts of the year 1829, were more than one hundred and forty-three thousand dollars, and in 1830, over one hundred and seventy-three thousand dollars. One hundred and fifteen new auxiliary societies were recognized in these two years; the united amount of Bibles and Testaments, printed or purchased by the parent Society during the same time, was six hundred and sixty-eight thousand. And the total number of books printed and purchased by the American Bible Society from its formation, exceeded one million four hundred

thousand ! and they were sent for distribution to South America, Bombay, Burmah, Ceylon, China, Greece, Palestine, and the Indian tribes wherever missions had been established.

The missionaries at the Sandwich Islands, translated the Gospel of Matthew into Hawaiian before the return of Mr. Loomis, their printer, to this country. After his health was sufficiently restored, he printed for the American Bible Society, fifteen thousand copies of Matthew the most of which were forwarded to the Sandwich Islands. The Bible was issued from the presses of the parent Society, in the English, French, German, Spanish, Welch, Hawaiian, Delaware, Mohawk, and Seneca (Indian) languages. At the anniversary, in May, 1829, a resolution was adopted which amounted to a promise, to make an attempt, with the aid of the auxiliary societies, to furnish every destitute family with the Holy Bible, without *note or comment*, in the space of two years ! In consequence thereof, the Managers laid in a supply of paper, with a view to meet every demand for Bibles, however great. The presses

were multiplied, and had donations been proportional to the public wants, the pledge of the Board might have been easily redeemed.

How many Bibles and Testaments were printed by the Bible Society in 1822? What efforts were made by the young men in the city of Washington, to aid the Bible cause? What was accomplished by young gentlemen in the cities of Boston, New York, and Baltimore the same year? How many people are supposed to be destitute of the Scriptures in South America? What year was the first Bible Society, auxiliary to the American Society, formed in the State of Illinois? What resolutions were formed at Rochester in 1825? If all the people in the United States should form and execute the same resolutions, what would be the result? What is the present population of the United States? What the annual increase? Can you repeat the number of auxiliary societies in each State? What is the total number of books printed or purchased by the American Society since its formation? Where have they been sent?

CHAPTER VII.

“ Father of mercies, in thy word
What endless glories shine !
Forever be thy name adored
For these celestial lines.

O may these heavenly pages be
My ever dear delight ;
And still new beauties may I see,
And still increasing light ! ”

WHEN the evening arrived for Mr. Guildford to conclude the history of the American Bible Society, he felt quite animated, for he found the hall filled to overflowing, and as he rose to speak, he perceived many a youthful countenance that bore strong marks of deep-felt interest. He began by saying, “ The receipts of the American Bible Society, for the year 1831, were *one hundred and twenty-five thousand three hundred and sixteen dollars and seventy-nine cents*. Ninety-eight new auxiliaries,—each, in most cases, embracing a whole county,

and in several cases an entire State,—were formed during that year. These auxiliaries were connected with branch associations; and a large part of them were formed in newly settled portions of the country where there had always been a great scarcity of the Scriptures. In Kentucky, twenty-five county auxiliaries were formed; in Virginia, twelve; in Ohio, fifteen; in Tennessee, ten; the same number in North Carolina; in Illinois, eight; and in Michigan, seven.

The number of Bibles and Testaments printed in the course of the year, was *two hundred and seventy thousand*. Between twenty-six and twenty-seven thousand Bibles were sent to the State of Tennessee; more than thirteen thousand to Indiana; almost sixteen thousand to Kentucky; and nearly nine thousand to Ohio.

You will recollect that a resolution was passed at the Society's anniversary in 1829, that every destitute family in the United States should be supplied with a copy of the Bible within *two years*, provided, the auxiliary socie-

ties would co-operate, furnish the means in season, &c. The two years having expired, you naturally inquire whether or not the pledge of the Society has been redeemed? It would give me pleasure to be able to say, with truth, *the whole country is now amply furnished with the word of God*, but truth forbids such a statement. It was a noble undertaking, however, and in the prosecution of it, the managers did what they could; and they were never charged with neglecting any part of their appropriate duties. They prepared books sufficient to meet all the demands of the auxiliary societies, and they sent agents to almost every State and Territory in the Union. They also sent circulars and letters through the whole length and breadth of the land, offering to furnish Bibles and Testaments at cost, at reduced prices, on especial sales, or gratuitously, as the circumstances might demand.

It would be pleasant, did time permit, to give you a detailed account of the proceedings of each State, in the work of supply; but a summary sketch of the operations must, for the

present, suffice. In thirteen States the work was reported as substantially performed. In eight States, viz. Delaware, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, and Louisiana, about three-fourths of the same good work was supposed to be completed. In the States of Indiana and Illinois, about one half; and in Missouri, Alabama, Arkansas, the Florida Territories, something more than one half of the work was reported as accomplished. The severity of the winter, in many of the southern and western States prevented the distribution of a great number of books, which, in the usual state of the roads and rivers, would have been put in circulation. In supplying Vermont, eight thousand Bibles were distributed, *six thousand* of which went into families before entirely destitute ! In one town the population of which did not exceed six or seven hundred souls, no less than *fifty families* were found destitute.

In one county in North Carolina, having but thirteen hundred legal voters, two hundred families were found without the word of God.

In another county the agent visited a poor widow with several children, who had recently had her house and all she possessed consumed by fire. She had no Bible ; but such was her eagerness to possess one, that she offered to cut out a piece of cloth then in the loom, sufficient to pay for it. On being furnished with a Bible gratuitously, she exclaimed, as she wiped the tear of gratitude from her face, ‘ Now I can read in the word of God, those blessed promises on which my soul has rested in all my trouble.’

Some efforts were made during the year, to furnish the parent Society with an additional building for printing. Two lots were purchased on reasonable terms, and the Managers commenced the erection of two new buildings. The citizens of New York subscribed the greater part of the money which was expended in building the Society’s first house, and those begun this year were to be paid for by money temporarily borrowed from the general funds of the Society. But before the completion of these houses, Col. Vanick, the President of the

Society, made a donation of *five hundred* dollars towards the buildings, and *two thousand* dollars towards the general supply of Bibles. This good man died in July, 1831. The managers experienced a great loss in his death. He was the first Treasurer of the Society, and was familiar with all its history and interests; and from a characteristic energy of mind and punctuality in business, he was eminently calculated for the services which he performed gratuitously for fifteen years, either as Treasurer, Vice President, or President.

In January, 1832, the Board were called to mourn the death of Col. Robert Troup, one of the oldest Vice Presidents of the Society. For many years he had sat by the side of the President, as his friend and counsellor, both at the monthly meetings of the Board and the annual meetings of the Society. The Hon. John Cotton Smith, of Connecticut, succeeded Col. Vanick, as President, and John Pintard, LL. D. was elected to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of Col. Troup.

The new buildings commenced in 1831,

were completed in 1832. The printing house is four stories high, forty-four feet in front and rear, and thirty-four feet in depth. The other building, also four stories in height, is on the rear of the lot, and fronts on Theatre alley.—It is fifty-six feet in length, and thirty feet in depth, and communicates on each story with the old Depository. This building was at first occupied as a depository for printing paper, stereotype plates not in use, and Bibles and Testaments bound and in printed sheets.

The whole establishment, therefore, including the old and new buildings, is ninety-four feet in front on Nassau street, and the same in rear on Theatre alley, and—including the Depository, thirty feet wide and four stories high, which connects the front and rear—has a depth of one hundred feet.

In 1832, the managers requested the auxiliary societies in the unsupplied States, to explore their respective fields, and to make known to the Board the number of books they might respectively want. In all the States, with one or two exceptions, an estimate was

made, by persons on the ground, as to the number of books they might probably require, and the Board uniformly forwarded such a number of copies as was supposed requisite to a general supply. Distributions of these books were going on through the year; and many counties were reported as supplied, and others as partially so; but there was abundant evidence, at the close of the year, that, in several of the States, the work of supply was not complete. Before the work of supply was more than two-thirds performed, there was affecting evidence that a re-supply was called for in numerous places which had been reported as fully supplied but a short time before. In the State of New York a county which had been furnished with a Bible for every destitute family, was re-investigated three or four years afterwards, and *nine hundred and ninety* families were found without a Bible, and five hundred of them without even a New Testament! I could mention numerous places that had been completely furnished, where, in one year after,

there were from one to two hundred new families destitute of the Bible ! Do you ask, how does it happen that a re-supply is so soon called for ? I answer,—there must be a continual demand from the increase of families, and from emigration. Many, very many of the European emigrants are poor, and unless gratuitously supplied with the Bible, they will be likely to live and die without it. I have no doubt there are thousands of families among our own countrymen, who are this moment destitute of this blessed book, and unless they are supplied by those who know and value the sacred Oracles, they will remain destitute. Every part of the land should be re-investigated as often as once in two and three years. No other method but a systematic re-supply will *keep* the Word of Life in every dwelling, or prevent thousands of our countrymen annually from going, unenlightened and unwarned, to the grave.

The number of Bibles and Testaments issued in 1832, was *one hundred and fifteen thousand eight hundred and two* copies. The

receipts of that year, deducting the sums borrowed, amounted to a little more than *one hundred and seven thousand dollars*.

Before the close of 1832, the Board received a loud call for Bibles from the Mohawk and Ojibwa tribes of Indians, from Russia, from Greece and Asia Minor, from the Sandwich Islands, from Bombay, from the Burman empire, and from China! You will doubtless recollect that the second article of the constitution of the American Bible Society, says that “this Society shall also, according to its ability, extend its influence to other countries, whether Christian, Mohammedan, or Pagan;” and to me, the voice of Providence, in these applications, seems peculiarly striking and affecting. The very first moment, since the formation of the Society, when foreign demands of any magnitude could have been listened to by the Board, on account of domestic claims, the cry for the word of God comes from all these nations almost simultaneously. The result of these applications you are, no doubt, eager to learn; and I am happy to say, that in Decem-

ber, the following appropriations were made by the Board of Managers. *Five thousand dollars* to aid in printing the Mahratta Scriptures, at Bombay, and the same sum toward printing the Hawaiian New Testament at the Sandwich Islands. They also resolved to appropriate *five thousand dollars* towards printing the Scriptures in the Burman tongue, and to prepare a large edition of the modern Greek Testament. To meet the other calls from Russia, Asia Minor, and China, it was thought that *fifty thousand dollars* would be needed; and the friends of benevolence were called upon to furnish it. Young Men's Bible Societies were multiplied in the cities and large towns, and a new impulse in the cause was apparent in almost every part of the country.

I now pass on to a survey of the year 1833. The receipts of this year, from all sources, amounted to *eighty-four thousand, nine hundred thirty-five dollars and forty-eight cents*. The number of Bibles and Testaments issued from the depository this year, was *ninety-one thousand, one hundred and sixty-eight*. The issues

of Bibles during the specified *two years*, in which every family in the United States was to have the offer of a Bible, amounted to *three hundred thousand*. But after this season of high excitement and great exertion, an apathy followed, which so paralyzed auxiliary societies, that the number of Bibles issued the two succeeding years, was only *one hundred thousand*. From this statement, do not imagine that more *evil* than *good* grew out of the effort to put a Bible, within two years, into every family in the country. To show you the happy result of this noble undertaking, I will relate one or two anecdotes, which were related by agents and distributors. In East Tennessee there were five counties in a mountainous region, where societies could not be formed for want of materials, there being few Churches, or religious men of any name. The Board found no way to furnish these counties but to supply neighboring auxiliaries with books for this purpose. Two of these counties were supplied immediately, and a missionary was soon stationed in one of them. A wonderful

change was apparent in the moral aspect of the country very soon after the Bibles were put into circulation. Previously few could be collected to hear preaching when a minister happened to pass that way ; but after the Bible had been circulated and read, ministers were welcomed, and whenever they made an appointment, a large audience assembled and gave serious attention. An old man told a distributor that for eighteen years neither himself or wife had heard a sermon. Churches, schools, and preachers, are usually found in the train of blessings which invariably follow the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, and so it was in this remote county.

The Board were this year called upon to make grants to several societies engaged in distributing the Scriptures to soldiers and seamen, and also to furnish more or less directly some of the provinces of Canada, Mexico, South America, France, Russia, Greece, Africa, Bombay, Ceylon, Burmah, Java, China, and the Sandwich Islands.

The year 1834 opened upon the Society

with brighter prospects than any preceding one. The demand for the word of God was extremely urgent, and in some cases almost illimitable. The number of new auxiliaries was twenty-seven. The receipts amounted to the sum of *eighty-five thousand six hundred dollars and eighty-two cents*. For distribution in foreign countries there were contributed between twenty-seven and twenty-eight thousand dollars.

The whole number of Bibles and Testaments printed in the course of the year, was *one hundred forty-nine thousand three hundred and seventy-five* ; but the larger part of them were Testaments in modern Greek.

Many grants were made this year to the army and navy, and also to seamen in this and foreign lands.

In 1835, the number of new auxiliary societies was not so large as in some former years ; but numerous branch associations were formed in connection with existing auxiliaries. These minor associations received Bibles and Testaments, from the larger auxiliaries, to distribute

among those who were in need, and made remittances to the parent Society through the same channel which conveyed the books. By the adaptation of this system, a small Bible Depository was kept up in every town and neighborhood, where the Scriptures could, at all times, be obtained. Among the auxiliaries formed during the year, *two* of a new and deeply interesting character were formed in Texas. They were both formed by the Rev. Sumner Bacon, an agent of the Bible Society.

The sum paid into the Treasury, from all sources, this year, amounted to *one hundred thousand eight hundred and six dollars and twenty-five cents*. Of this sum nearly thirty-two thousand were for foreign distribution.

With a view to furnish the numerous emigrants to this country from Portugal, Italy, Holland, Sweden, and Poland, with a copy of the Scriptures, the managers imported a small quantity from Europe in all those languages. The Polish exiles who have taken up their residence in this country, have in most instances received the word of God in their own

tongue with the warmest expressions of gratitude. With what gift, I would ask, can these oppressed strangers be saluted, as they land upon our shores, which will be so likely to prepare them for *useful citizenship*, for happiness in this and a future world, as the Sacred Scriptures ?

Among the most interesting applications for aid, was one from Doct. Howe, Principal of the "New England Society for the education of the Blind." After having spent some time in England, France, and Germany, pursuing investigations connected with the humane object to which he is devoted, Doct. Howe commenced the preparation of books with raised letters, which his pupils easily trace and comprehend by the touch. Having obtained a press suitable for this species of printing, this gentleman, in behalf of the Institution with which he is connected, and of more than *six thousand* blind in the United States, applied to the Board for means to publish the New Testament. They cheerfully granted one thousand dollars toward the accomplishment of this in-

teresting object, and promised further assistance in future. The same sum was granted by the Massachusetts Bible Society ; and the New York Female Bible Society, with a characteristic liberality, furnished eight hundred dollars. Strange as it may appear to many, it has been fully ascertained that, after a season of practice, a blind pupil will read these raised letters with much facility.

During the year the work of re-supply was prosecuted in some sections of the country with very commendable zeal, and in many places more Bibles were distributed than during the four or five preceding years. Townships in the western part of the State of New York, which were supplied in 1820, and again in 1830, were found to contain from twenty to eighty or ninety destitute families. Wherever examinations were made, the disclosures of alarming destitution showed the necessity for a thorough re-investigation and supply of the whole country.

Distributions of Bibles and Testaments were made in the course of the year on a large scale

to Sabbath schools, to foreign emigrants and seamen. More than a thousand copies of the Word of Life were circulated in South America, by Mr. Wheelwright, the agent of the Society in that country. This gentleman says that the civil officers, the common people generally, and a part of the priesthood were highly favorable to his benevolent object. One clergyman, a member of the senate, expressed the full conviction that the Bible ought to have an unrestricted circulation. The bishop, however, thought otherwise. He summoned the agent into his presence, and expressed his entire disapprobation of his labors, and requested him to desist from further distributions. The consequence of this opposition was, that the remainder of the Bibles which had been left with a native agent for disposal, were taken back to save them from the flames. Through the instrumentality of Mr. Wheelwright, about four hundred copies were disposed of in Peru. Several grants, in money and in books, were made in behalf of Northern India, Persia, France, Turkey, and many islands of the sea. Seven

thousand dollars were granted to Burmah, and six thousand to Ceylon, to aid in circulating the Bible in those countries. Every new channel opened for the distribution of the Bible, should call forth fervent gratitude from every heart which appreciates that precious book, and sees the universal wretchedness of those who are without its instructions.

I will now pass on to the year 1836. This year there was paid into the treasury the sum of *one hundred and four thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine dollars and forty-four cents*. More than nine thousand dollars of it was derived from legacies.

The managers complain that several once active female auxiliaries seemed to have left the labor of distributing the Scriptures at home in a good measure, to male associations, and to have turned their attention to raising funds to promote the good work abroad. The latter object is one of high importance, and ought not to be neglected, neither should the work of domestic distribution be abandoned by the ladies. There are many instances where

ladies can, with much more propriety and effect than gentlemen, visit families and individuals with the word of God. This is particularly the case in cities and large villages, where the poor, the sick, and the afflicted abound.

The following female auxiliaries are mentioned by the managers of the Society in terms of high commendation : The New York Female Bible Society ; this society paid *five hundred* dollars to aid Doct. Howe in publishing his New Testament for the blind. The Boston Ladies' Society, contributed to the parent Society seventeen hundred dollars. Annual contributions were also sent to the treasury of the parent Society from the Female Bible Societies in Wilmington and Newcastle, Del. ; from the Society in Middletown, Conn. ; from the Dutchess county Society, New York ; from Middlebury, Vermont ; from Lexington, Kentucky ; from Georgetown, District of Columbia ; and from several other societies. These greatly encouraged the Board, not only by their contributions, but by their abiding and increasing interest in circulating the Scriptures.

During the year, some of the male associations declined in zeal, while a few pressed forward. The Virginia Bible Society, besides sustaining their own general agent, paid into the treasury more than six thousand dollars. The New York Young Men's Society, paid nearly four thousand, and the Berkshire County Society, in Massachusetts, between one and two thousand. Perhaps no auxiliary manifested deeper interest in the cause than the one located in the city of Washington. At a meeting of the Bible Society in that city, one very benevolent gentleman pledged the payment of one thousand dollars in four annual instalments; another gentleman seconded the resolution; he offered as he gave his pledge by saying 'he would pay the like sum on the same terms.' So much interest was awakened on the occasion that another meeting was soon called, at which the interest far surpassed that of the former one. On this occasion, after the usual number of addresses, the pledge of the city Bible Society was increased from one to four thousand dollars, many individuals specifying portions of

this sum which they would respectively contribute. Before the assembly dispersed, a gentleman offered to give *ten thousand dollars*, whenever fifty other persons should agree to pay each an equal amount within five years ; and afterwards this gentleman agreed to pay the above sum whenever ten others, instead of fifty, should contribute each a like sum.

A re-supply was the principal business of a large portion of the auxiliaries, and the number of the destitute was found far more than had been expected. In New Hampshire, where the Bible cause had received uncommon attention, the statements made by the explorers and distributors, were at first considered almost incredible ; but time convinced all that the reports were correct. The county of Merrimack, in that State, where the people enjoyed greater means of religious instruction than in any part of the State, almost every town having from one to five or six ministers of some Christian denomination, more than *two hundred and fifty* families were this year found destitute of the word of God ; and some of them had not seen

a Bible in their *dwellings* for five, ten, and even twenty years !

In the county of St. Lawrence, in the State of New York, *seven hundred and seventy-six* families was found without an entire copy of the Scriptures, although the previous supply had been extended not only to families, but to readers. In the city of Brooklyn in the same State, an agent found no less than *four hundred* families without a Bible. These facts show the necessity of active, zealous and continued exertions in the work of Bible distribution. Something should be done every year in the way of distribution, and not more than three or four years should pass without a thorough examination and supply throughout the bounds of every auxiliary in the land. Were this course pursued with system and perseverance, who can estimate the blessings, both social and religious, which would follow ? Will not all those who have been enlightened and sanctified by the truths of the Gospel, cheerfully furnish the means for sending the same light of revelation to the hundreds of millions who are yet in the darkness of nature, and

pray for the Holy Spirit to renew them by his Almighty power?

Passing from the year 1836 to the year 1837, the number of Bibles and Testaments issued this year amounted to *two hundred and six thousand two hundred and forty* copies. The income of the society from all sources, was *ninety thousand five hundred and seventy-eight dollars and eighty-nine cents*.

During the year comparatively little exertion was made to raise funds for distribution in foreign lands ; but considerable was made for domestic supply. Many of the auxiliary societies were wholly engaged in the work of supplying our own country. Most of the auxiliaries went over their respective fields of labor and supplied such households as were destitute. There was a most unexpected demand for Bibles, for destitute families, in every part of the country. In the town of Long Island, a thorough investigation and supply had been made *three* times within eight years, and yet during this year there were found to be *sixteen hundred* destitute families. The Long Island Bible Society,

found, on careful inquiry, three thousand six hundred children, between eight and fifteen, and furnished each with a Testament. The measure of furnishing the children and youth with the New Testament, is one of the most important, in my view, which the Board has ever recommended.

The Providence Young Men's Bible Society, in Rhode Island, was this year unusually active. After supplying the city of Providence, this association resolved to supply every destitute family in the State with a Bible, and every child under fifteen years of age, with a Testament. This resolution has been carried into thorough execution. In effecting it, *twelve hundred* families were found destitute of a Bible. In many other States the work of supplying children and youth with the Testament, was commenced and prosecuted with more or less engagedness. Having put the word of God into every dwelling, and also into the hand of every child and youth who can read, it will require ceaseless efforts to supply new cases of destitution. Owing to the growth and changeable character

of the population in many sections of the country, frequent investigations and supplies will in all probability be required from year to year, till the period of our stewardship is past.

In Wayne county, New York, where a late survey and supply had been made, between five and six hundred families were found destitute, and were supplied. Some of these families had been destitute from ten to sixteen years ; having been overlooked in the previous supply. In Tompkins county, more than six hundred families were found destitute, and in Jefferson county, a *thousand*, and nearly all of them were supplied.

Many interesting communications from missionaries in foreign parts, were received by the Board, some of which I should be happy to read to you, but I am admonished to be brief, as the time allotted to this exercise has nearly expired.

The Managers had long contemplated sending an agent to the countries bordering on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, to aid the missionaries in disseminating the sacred Scrip-

tures, and this year the Rev. Mr. Calhoun, of Massachusetts, late an officer in William's College, was engaged for this service, and sailed for Smyrna, in Asia Minor, where he is expected to reside for a season. Other agents were employed in most of the States and Territories, as usual.

I have now reached the year 1838,—the last year of the history of the Society.

During the past, and a part of the preceding year, the pecuniary embarrassments of the country were very severe, and affected the operations of the Bible, as well as other charitable institutions. Only *eighty-five thousand, six hundred and seventy-six dollars and eighty-three cents* were paid into the treasury ; and of this, more than *thirteen thousand dollars* were derived from bequests.

And here, since legacies have been so often lost to the Bible Society, by neglecting to use a proper form in making them, let me give you the form, as published by the Board of Managers. It is as follows, viz :

“ I bequeath to my executors the sum of

— dollars, in trust, to pay over the same in
— after my decease, to the person, who,
when the same shall be payable, shall act as
Treasurer of the American Bible Society,
formed in New York, in the year eighteen hun-
dred and sixteen, to be applied to the charita-
ble uses and purposes of the same Society, and
under its direction.”

During the past year, there were printed *thirty-four thousand* Bibles and *one hundred eight thousand* Testaments, in English, German, Spanish, and French ; there was also a larger number of books than usual imported in the Portuguese, Danish, Italian, Welch, and Syriac tongues.

The domestic distribution, the past year, was prosecuted with a good degree of success, and with increasing interest, among children and youth. Seamen and boatmen received particular attention. The latter class of men are far more numerous than is commonly supposed, and I presume that many before me will find it difficult to believe that the number of

boatmen on the *canals* of the State of New York alone, amounts to *ten or twelve thousand* ! To these may be added without fear of exaggeration, as many as *seventy thousand* employed on the lakes and rivers of the west ; and I have not a doubt that as many more are engaged in business so connected with boats, lakes, and rivers, as to come under the influence of labors to benefit the class of boatmen alone.

Since the era of Bible Societies and during the period of the present generation, the Bible has been translated into *one hundred and eighty-five* living tongues. The number of known languages is something more than *three hundred*, so you will readily perceive that a great work remains to be done before the whole family of man shall be able to read in the tongue in which they were born, the only book which is able to make wise unto salvation.

The whole number of Bibles and Testaments printed by the Society, since its organization in 1816, amounts to *two million three hundred and fifty-three thousand two hundred*

and ninety-eight ; to which add the more than *nine millions* issued by the British and Foreign Bible Society, since its formation in 1804, and we have in all nearly twelve million copies of the word of God prepared and scattered through the earth, since 1804.

You will doubtless recollect the statement recently made in this hall, by my friend, Mr. S——. He said that from the time the art of printing was discovered till the establishment of the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1804, the number of Bibles which had been printed did not probably exceed *twenty-five millions* ; combine the whole, and we shall have from thirty-six to thirty-seven millions of printed copies of the word of God. This may appear to some of my youthful hearers an abundant supply, but my dear children, it is to be feared that as many as *one hundred and thirty million families*, in the world, are this moment destitute of the Holy Scriptures. I do not say this to discourage you, but it ought to stimulate all of us to do with our might

whatever our hands find to do, to multiply and disseminate copies of the blessed Bible. This holy book has begun to find its way into almost all the nations of the earth. Numerous grants were made the past year for foreign distribution, the most important of which were sent to Canada, Texas, South America, Ceylon, Africa, Spain, Germany, France, Russia, and Finland.

The changes which God has wrought among the nations of the earth, since the organization of this Society, in 1816, are truly wonderful. 'At that time, Spanish America and Brazil, shut out, by royal and papal edicts, every Bible proffered by Protestant hands. France and Russia were at that time nearly inaccessible, and Spain and Portugal wholly so. Greece was then under the iron sway of Turkey, and little could be done in Syria or the Holy Land. India would then hardly furnish a resting place to the American missionary. China was environed, not only by exclusive codes and customs, which claimed to be unal-

terable, but had a language which almost seemed to defy acquisition. Africa was in hopeless ignorance, and the islands of the Pacific, with one or two solitary exceptions, were unacquainted with the existence of a divine revelation; and even our numerous Indian tribes from the Hudson and Champlain to the Rocky Mountains, were in the same condition.' Now, mark the change. The Delaware, the Mohawk, the Seneca, the Ojibwa, the Cherokee and the Choctaw, and some other Indians, *now* have the Scriptures or parts of them in their families and schools. The excellent missionaries who have prepared these translations, are on the spot to unfold and enforce their blessed truths. 'Spanish America, freed from her former vassalage, admits the Bible into circulation, though few, from papal education, have a disposition to read it. In almost every part of Europe, legal obstacles to its diffusion are, to a great extent, removed, and at a thousand avenues it is finding its way among the unchristianized nations of the East.'

The present prospects of the American Bible Society are truly encouraging ; but the help of every friend of the Bible is wanted, to increase the number, and efficiency of her auxiliaries, now about *nine hundred*, including *two thousand* branch associations. Your assistance is also needed in the work of exploring and supplying this place and the adjacent towns which you will probably find as destitute as any of your own neighborhoods. Indeed, my friends, why will you not, every one of you, testify your gratitude to God for the gift of his word, and form a Bible Society, and continue your efforts in the Bible cause, till beams of heavenly light shall shine, not only just around you here, but over the wide plains of South America, and across the ocean to benighted Africa, to the dark and bewildered inhabitants of Asia, and to all the countless islands that lie sprinkled over the vast Pacific, and other oceans.

In joyful anticipations of the day of millennial glory, when the knowledge of the Lord shall

cover the whole earth, I close my account of the origin and progress of the American Bible Society."

The singing of the following hymn brought the exercises to a close.

"Gird thy sword on mighty Savior,
Make the word of truth thy car;
Prosper in thy course triumphant;
All success attend thy war:
Gracious victor,
Bring thy trophies from afar.

Majesty combined with meekness,
Righteousness and peace unite,
To ensure thy blessed conquests—
Take possession of thy right;
Ride triumphant
Dressed in robes of purest light.

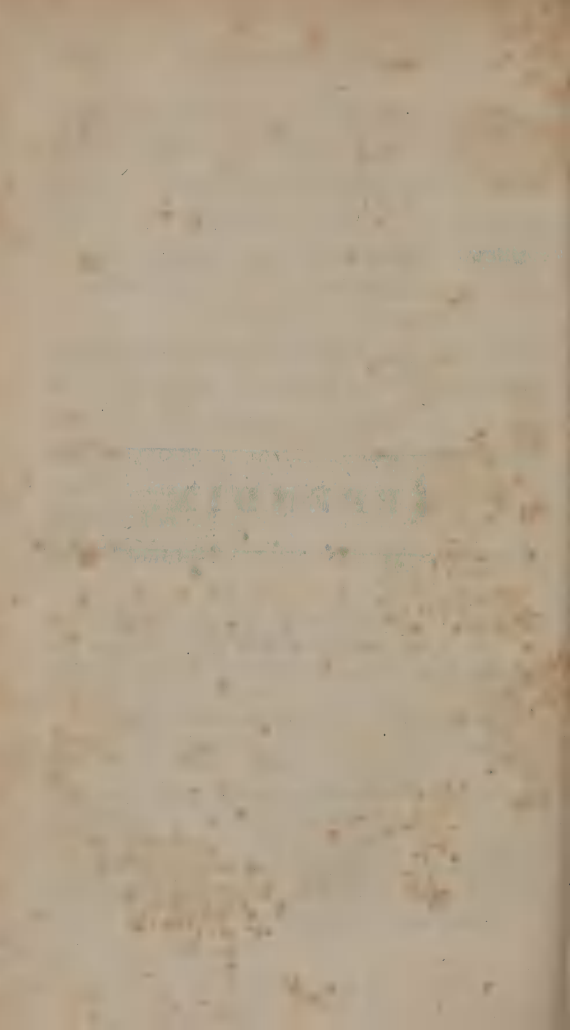
Blest are they that touch thy sceptre,
Blest are they that own thy reign;
Freed from sin—that worst of tyrants—
Rescued from its galling chain;
Saints and Angels,
All who know thee, bless thy reign."

After the benediction, Mr. Guildford proceeded to organize a male and female Bible

association, which, within a week, embraced almost every man, woman, and child in the parish. They adopted the Constitution which Mr. S—— presented, and the last I heard, exploring, visiting, and distributing committees were laboring with great energy, cheerfulness, and success. The members of the Bible class and Sabbath school were among the foremost in these labors of love, and Mr. Guildford is confident that he owes a great part of his ministerial prosperity to the special efforts he has made to make his people acquainted with and interested in all the benevolent institutions of the present age.

What did the receipts amount to in 1831? How many new auxiliaries were formed during the year? Was the resolution to furnish every destitute family with the Bible in two years, carried into effect? How many Bibles were issued in 1832? How much money was contributed? Has any thing been done to send the Bible to pagan lands? How many Bibles have the American Bible Society printed? How many the British and Foreign Bible Society? How many Bibles is it supposed have been printed since the art of printing was discovered? How many families in the world are supposed to be, at this time, destitute of the word of God? Ought not you to be very active in promoting the Bible cause? Are you active and liberal in this good cause?

APPENDIX.



CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I. This Society shall be called the Ladies', or Gentlemen's Bible Society of M——, auxiliary to the American, or perhaps some County Bible Society.

ART. II. The sole object of this Society shall be to circulate the Holy Bible without *note or comment*.

ART. III. Every female, (or you can designate any class of persons you please,) who shall contribute annually, to the funds of this Society, shall be a member.

ART. IV. After deducting the necessary expenses, and supplying the destitute with Bibles and Testaments, within the limits of the Society, all the money remaining in the hands of the Treasurer, shall be paid over to the parent, or county, (or if a gentleman's society has been formed in a town, it would be a saving of trouble and expense, to have the Ladies', Juvenile, or Infant Bible Societies, auxiliaries to theirs,) to furnish other destitute places with the Word of Life.

ART. V. A President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, with visiting committees, shall be elected annually, and shall constitute a Board of Managers.

ART. VI. The President, and in case of his or her absence, the Vice President shall preside at all meetings of the Society and of the Board of Managers ; and shall have power to call special meetings of the same. All meetings shall be opened with prayer.

ART. VII. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to notify all meetings of the Society, and of the Board of Managers, and to arrange the business to be brought before them, and keep a fair record of all the doings of the Society.

ART. VIII. The Treasurer shall take charge of all the money, and hold it in subjection to the Board of Managers ; and make an annual report of receipts and expenditures.

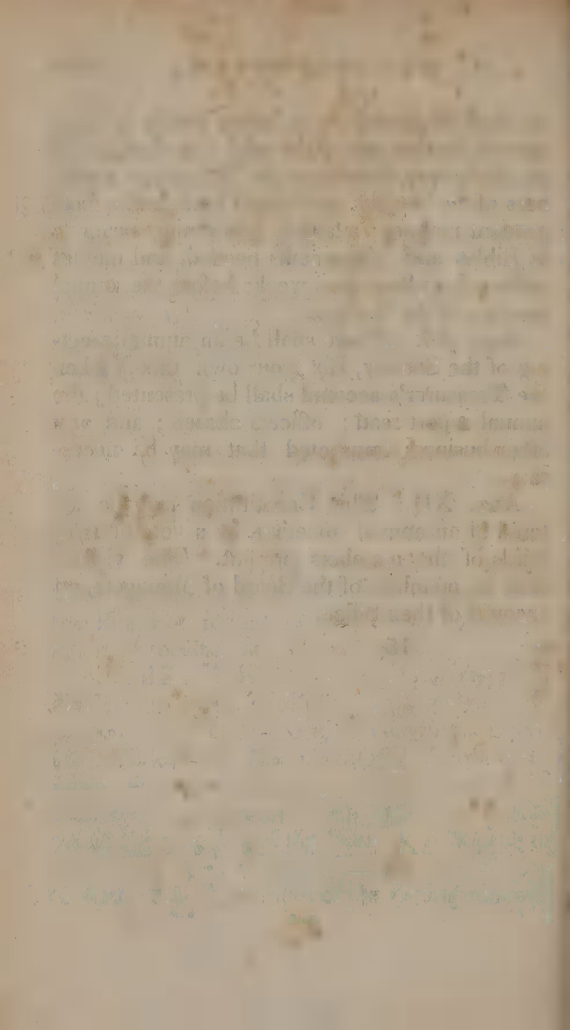
ART. IX. The Board of Managers shall divide the town, or district, and assign each portion to one of the visiting committee ; procure Bibles and Testaments for distribution ; enact their own by-laws ; fill vacancies in their body ; and adopt such measures to advance the interests of the Society, as appear to them most likely to secure the object.

ART. X. The duties of the visiting commit-

tee shall be to call upon every family in their several districts, ascertain who are destitute of the Scriptures, invite persons to become members of the Society, and collect funds in the most prudent manner ; a faithful return must be made of Bibles and Testaments needed, and monies collected, at least two weeks before the annual meeting of the Society.

ART. XI. There shall be an annual meeting of the Society, (fix your own time,) when the Treasurer's account shall be presented ; the annual report read ; officers chosen ; and any other business transacted that may be necessary.

ART. XII. This Constitution may be altered at an annual meeting, by a vote of two-thirds of the members present. The visitors shall be members of the Board of Managers, on account of their office.



H Y M N S .



I.

Let all the heathen writers join
To form one perfect book,
Great God, if once compared to thine,
How mean their writings look !

Not the most perfect rules they gave,
Could show one sin forgiven,
Nor lead one step beyond the grave ;
But thine conducts to heaven.

I've seen an end of what we call
Perfection here below ;
How short the powers of nature fall,
And can no farther go !

Yet men would fain be just with God,
By works their hands have wrought;
But thy commands, exceeding broad,
Extend to every thought.

In vain we boast perfection here,
While sin defiles our frame;
And sinks our virtues down so far,
They scarce deserve the name.

Our faith and love, and every grace,
Fall far below thy word;
But perfect truth and righteousness
Dwell only with the Lord.



II.

How shall the young secure their hearts,
And guard their lives from sin?
Thy word the choicest rules imparts,
To keep the conscience clean.

When once it enters to the mind,
It spreads such light abroad,
The meanest souls instruction find,
And raise their thoughts to God !

'Tis like the sun, a heavenly light,
That guides us all the day ;
And through the dangers of the night,
A lamp to lead the way.

The men that keep thy law with care,
And meditate thy word,
Grow wiser than their teachers are,
And better know the Lord.

Thy precepts make me truly wise ;
I hate the sinner's road :
I hate my own vain thoughts that rise,
But love thy law, my God.

Thy word is everlasting truth,
How pure is every page !
That holy book shall guide our youth,
And well support our age.

III.

O how I love thy holy law !
'Tis daily my delight :
And thence my meditations draw
Divine advice by night.

My waking eyes prevent the day,
To meditate thy word :
My soul with longing melts away
To hear thy Gospel, Lord.

How doth thy word my heart engage !
How well employ my tongue !
And in my tiresome pilgrimage,
Yields me a heavenly song.

Am I a stranger, or at home,
'Tis my perpetual feast ;
Not honey dropping from the comb,
So much allures my taste.

No treasures so enrich the mind,
Nor shall thy *Word* be sold,

For loads of silver well refined,
Nor heaps of choicest gold.

When nature sinks, and spirits droop,
Thy promises of grace
Are pillars to support my hope,
And there I write thy praise.



IV.

Laden with guilt, and full of fears,
I fly to thee, my Lord ;
And not a glimpse of hope appears,
But in thy written word.

The volume of my Father's grace
Does all my grief assuage ;
Here I behold my Savior's face
Almost in every page.

This is the field where hidden lies
The pearl of price unknown ;
That person is divinely wise
Who makes this pearl his own.

Here consecrated water flows,
To quench my thirst of sin ;
Here the fair tree of knowledge grows ;
No danger dwells therein.

This is the Judge that ends the strife
Where wit and reason fail ;
My guide to everlasting life,
Through all this gloomy vale.

Oh, may thy counsels, mighty God,
My roving feet command ;
Nor I forsake the happy road
That leads to thy right hand !

V.

I hear thy word with love,
And I would fain obey ;
Send thy good Spirit from above,
To guide me lest I stray.

O who can ever find
The errors of his ways ?
Yet with a bold, presumptuous mind,
I would not dare transgress.

Warn me of every sin ;
Forgive my secret faults,
And cleanse this guilty soul of mine,
Whose crimes exceed my thoughts.

While with my heart and tongue
I spread thy praise abroad,
Accept the worship and the song,
My Savior and my God.

And now, my dear, I have
 a letter from your mother
 and she is very well.

I hope you are the same.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 father.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 mother.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 sister.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 brother.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 friend.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 neighbor.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 countryman.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 citizen.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 subject.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 man.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 creature.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 being.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 existence.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 life.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 soul.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 spirit.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 mind.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 heart.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 love.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 affection.

I am, my dear, your affectionate
 friendship.





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